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The Election

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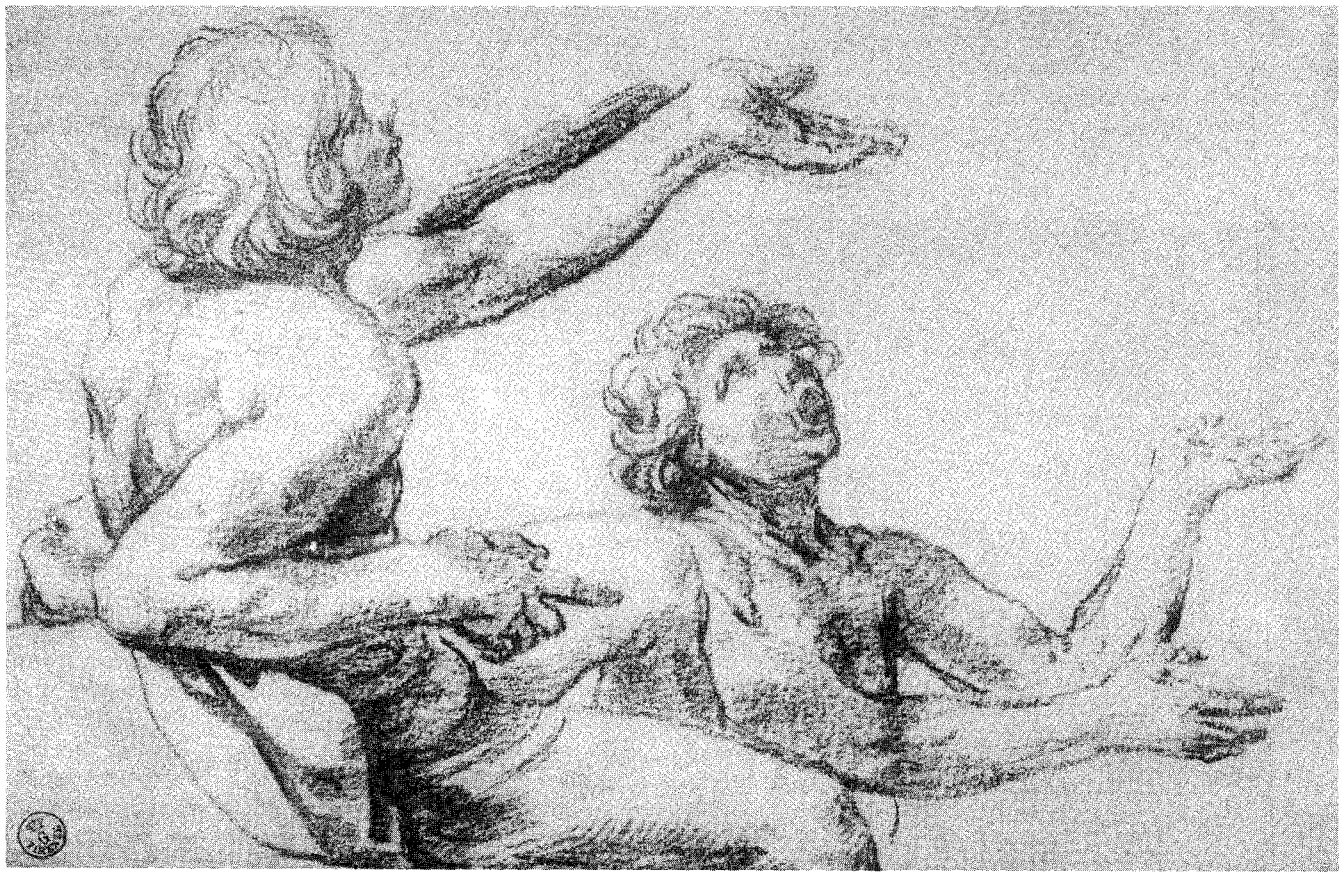
The Election



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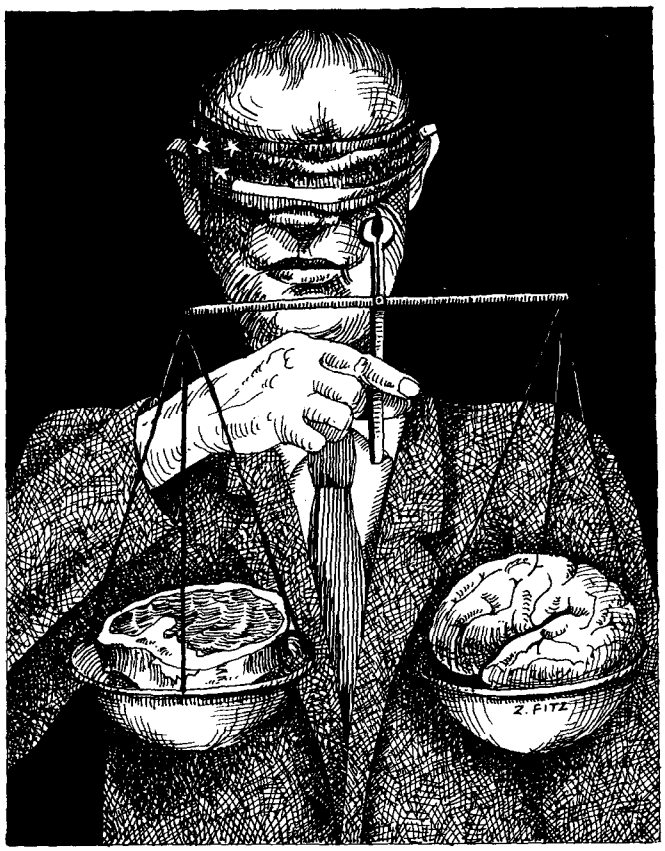
COMMENT

Democracy, its failures, weaknesses, and sins notwithstanding, is the only political system in which the entire social body is to decide on who should conduct its affairs in its name. By the electoral process the majority's opinion is consecrated as a source of legitimate political power. Annals record many variations of democratic societies in which the fate of minorities was either precarious, or hypocritically manipulated, as long as they were unable to transform themselves into majorities. Bursting into history, and into human awareness everywhere on earth, America made clear that the rights, prerogatives, and anxieties of her minorities were her paramount concern. However, a moral precondition for a correctly functioning American democracy was the assumption that the legally outvoted minority loyally accepts the ballot's verdict and fairly considers the elected officials as *their* authority throughout the constitutionally prescribed period of government.



How does this fragile arrangement, laden with endless conflicts, survive in our current political reality and on the present electoral scene?

Barely. A healthy respect for minority opinion has been transformed into acquiescence to the nonnegotiable demands of every ethnic group and to the shrill promulgations of behavioral minorities whose sexual ideology successfully negotiates the stormy seas of political showdowns. Consequently, a picture that emerges from chaos tells us enough about how the American society faces its 1984 political rites. To begin with, serious political discourse is as good as out. Vulgar stridency, accusatory insults, and sophomoric callousness are in. They constitute the main weapon of the minorities and of those parts of society which became known as interest groups. In the previous election, no one demonstrated against President Carter proclaiming that he was eating babies for breakfast: people went to the polling booths where they formed a majority and routed the incumbent. As it appears that the majority of Americans lean toward President Reagan, a coalition of minorities and interest groups has turned to a fishwife's tactical warfare. Their vituperations are enthusiastically supported by the liberal media, which by nature turn the sheer quantity of incriminations into a new political quality. The people who run the evening news never cease to assure us that the din of protest is a sign of the robustness of American public life.

The National Convention of the Democratic Party ended on a note of gushy, overbearing patriotism. It did not come unexpected: speaker after speaker invoked patriotism both as term and notion. Patriotism is an easy word, susceptible to every possible perversion, but it also is a complex sentiment which can be endlessly trivialized. Jacobins used it as a catchword. Marx and later Lenin denounced it as a source of vice and infamy: its negation was the supreme communist virtue. Stalin lifted it up from the dialectical gutter of *bourgeois* iniquities in order to mobilize the Russian masses during World War II, and, suddenly, communist subversives, ultra-leftist terrorists, and professional revolutionaries all began to call themselves patriots. What's worse, the liberal media all over the West started to do exactly the same, thereby distorting, obscuring, and twisting the meaning and sensibility vested in patriotism's concept and content. Johnson's definition of patriotism as the last refuge of a scoundrel began to take on new meaning.

There's no reason to doubt the character, caliber, and virtue of the Democratic Party's patriotism; its love of the native soil whether it is covered by fields and meadows or the big city concrete, its dedication to the fundamental American ideals and tenets. It is a party whose leaders were presiding when America entered four wars during this century, each time painfully involving their sometimes tormented, but always well-intentioned, perception of the American national interest.

Yet, in 1972, the Democratic Party had renounced, quite deliberately, both in spirit and rhetoric its title to patriotism, by embracing the darker social forces of the era, and nominating

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a man who promised to dilute, if not outrightly annihilate, the remnants of the American ethos, and the American historic mission. Patriotism as word and notion had been taken over by the Republicans so firmly and convincingly that for the next decade it became synonymous with the Republican political effort. As such, it came to serve as a facile target for every radical-liberal, leftist, and anti-American obloquy.

We saw, not long ago in Chicago, a black youth sporting cheap athletic shorts and a dime-store T-shirt—a far cry from Calvin Klein's jogging gear. On the shirt there was a motto: "America the Greatest." Such a minuscule indication seems to us enough to suggest that our patriotism, both as emotion and rational choice, should and must be redefined, reevaluated, and transvalued. But now, when the Democrats desperately try to appropriate it as their political commodity, refurbished for a quick sale, we must also ask ourselves: Should we buy such second-hand patriotism from those dealers?

What we may have already learned (though the lesson certainly hasn't reached everybody yet) during the past two decades is that the age of an American political party as a nonideological vehicle nears its end. It may be as well as over, but nobody wants to be the first to say it, least of all the media which still thrive on marketing disjointed progressivism in traditional packages. Populism can be of both the right and left varieties, but the endless stuffing of "new" populist messages in hoary political forms turns those forms into cabbage patch dolls—still salable, but of dubious value for a civilization. The Democrats seem to suffer more from their image as keepers of the relics of the past: they have sunk into the popular perception as dishonest without realizing that what they themselves view as high principle looks like cheap cynicism to the public. "By their syncretism ye shall know them . . . ," and anyone who can cram into one sentence his respect for the family and his support for homosexuality must reckon with his projecting an image a bit shady. Trying to present Rev. Jackson's black revanchism, rooted in ultra-leftist reasoning and rhetorics, as anything but pure demagoguery must raise many brows from sea to shining sea. Ms. Ferraro's sleaze factor is not exactly in her financial entanglements—after all, the knowledge of Einsteinian relativity and time-warp makes most of the rapacious media probing into politicians' underwear repulsive and absurd. However, the fact that Ms. Ferraro, part of a multimillionaire family, wants to force those who just make ends meet to practice compassion by government ukase, *this* is morally malodorous, and constitutes a sleaze not of conduct but of conscience. Moreover, it proves that the Democratic Party's liberalism has lapsed into abysmal incoherence, one that must finally do in the identity of the party of Andrew Jackson and Franklin Roosevelt who knew how to forge disparate social vectors into a program and a Weltanschauung. More and more, the Democrats look like a nationally screened *Helzapoppin,* a grotesque reality where "traditional values" are manufactured by Planned Parenthood's most radical theoreticians, with the help of psychotherapists from the human potential movement. According to the *Chicago Tribune,* Ms. Ferraro ". . . described herself in [a] speech as first a mother, then a Democrat, an American and a legislator." Could it be that she unwittingly marked the very marrow of what is deeply wrong with the Democratic Party—namely the priority and prevalence of political sectarianism over Americanism, over being first and foremost *an American.*

What began by the end of the 1960's as an alteration in the Democratic Party's ethos of fundamental dimensions seems to continue full speed. "Democracy" which Rev. Jackson invokes is of the kind that does not derive its substance from the American Revolution and Constitution. We deal here with a different Democratic Party which considers its moral and social urgencies immune to the popular will and the verdict of a majority. Jacobins, Marxists, and the entire European radical establishment of the last two centuries adhered to the same ideological principle. By now, we all bitterly know that that school of thinking inevitably leads to extreme totalitarianism. Rev. Jackson is not alone among the Democrats in his admiration of Castro, Assad, Sandinistas, or Arafat: his are genuine feelings. America's moral and social traditions are Rev. Jackson's demons, the hub of deviltry, and this is where, regardless of all differences, his sentiments and those of the Kremlin's converge. Feminism, quotas, environmentalism and the so-called special interests are minor gears in the mechanism of dismantling democracy in America: yet, taken together, they form a new, synergic, antidemocratic doctrine that will play a part in this election as the Democratic Party.

The *Chicago Tribune* summed it up this way: ". . . the themes of family and old-fashioned values . . . came to dominate the rhetoric . . ." in San Francisco. The Mexican-American Mayor Henry Cisneros of San Antonio told the *New York Times*: "The future of America, or at least of the Democratic Party, may be like its past: the immigrant story. The country has always run on the raw energy of the most recent arrivals." Governor Mario Cuomo of New York and Italian ethnic heritage, best verbalized this *leitmotif* of the Democratic Party's ideological program in his celebrated convention speech. Mr. Mondale, throughout his campaign, talked most often, according to the press reports, about ". . . free enterprise, self-reliance and the work ethic . . . about personal religious beliefs and the importance of family and home."

Once again, the puzzling question: will people buy a quickie imitation of what the Republicans and conservatives have intensely, often grimly, championed for three decades from the Democratic second-hand dealers? Demi-intelligent journalists often ask: "What are your values? Do you have any?" These are stupid questions and answers to them that go:

(continued on page 29)

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Social Placebos & Cures

Martin Carnoy, Derek Shearer, and Russell Rumberger: *A New Social Contract: The Economy and Government After Reagan;* Harper & Row; New York.

Richard Cornuelle: *Healing America: What Can Be Done About the Continuing Economic Crisis;* G. P. Putnam's Sons; New York.

by William R. Hawkins

Each of these books purports to discuss economics, hence the direct reference to "the economy" and "economic crisis" in the titles. Yet, for both, economics is a cover masking the real issue. This is not an uncommon practice. Economics gives an image of positive science. There may be disputes about how best to implement economic policy, but these are technical points which can presumably be settled by research and reason. The goals, essentially established by the 1946 Employment Act, are not considered to be in dispute: stable prices, full employment, and economic growth. Who would dispute that an economy which could produce all three simultaneously is an ideal one?

But behind the mask of scientific inquiry lurks the real substance of debate, the stuff of political philosophy and normative values—the issues that make for passionate conflicts and which cannot be settled by any appeal to statistics. The issue is *social* policy, not economic policy: How will people live and relate to each other? What values will form the foundations of society? It is a sign of the times that the vehicle by which social policy is conveyed is economics, the most materialistic of the social sciences.

A New Social Contract is the most direct of the two. The core of this contract is "a social consensus around equality and democracy for *all* Americans." The term "economics" hardly ever appears without the adjective "democratic" before it. And while growth, jobs, and prices are mentioned often enough, it is clear that the real goal is equality. If economic efficiency should conflict with equality (or, indeed, if anything should conflict with equality), then equality is to win without question.

Democracy itself is valuable chiefly because it fosters equality. As Aristotle observed: "Democracy . . . arises out of the notion that those who are equal in any respect are equal in all respects; because men are equally free, they claim to be absolutely equal." The plan is formidable. Democracy based on one-man, one-vote—regardless of any modifying

characteristics of education, accomplishment, or position—is the most perfect form of secular equality. The natural inequalities of humans, whether physical or intellectual, have vexed egalitarians for centuries, but political equality via the voting booth was devilishly easy to institute: it was merely legislated. The dream of legislating equality in other areas has been at the forefront of liberalism ever since. Once equality is the basis of the state, state power can be used to impose equality on society at large. In past eras, the organization of the state reflected the organization of society, but in today's liberal democracies, the organization of the state is meant to be opposed to the organization of society. Equality versus hierarchy, rights versus achievement.

Conservatives once worried about this, but recently the fight seems to have gone out of them. Michael Novak, a man of considerable intellectual gifts, has gained great influence for his theory of "democratic capitalism," even though the term is a virtual oxymoron. That is, democracy and capitalism may coexist for awhile, but they cannot form a system. President Reagan has proclaimed that the aim of U.S. foreign policy is to expand democracy throughout the world. One is considered beyond the pale to question whether freedom, progress, and democracy are not equivalent terms in all times and places. As Paul Gottfried, founder of the Conservative Historians Forum, recently asked: "Why do conservatives raise their banners on abandoned leftist positions?"

Perhaps reading what democracy means to Carnoy, Shearer, and Rumberger will rekindle some fire. For example, they maintain that the public sector is to be expanded, financed by cuts in defense and an increase in taxes on business and the "rich." They present figures showing that government has *already* grown from 19.5 percent of GNP in 1946 to 35.5 percent in 1982. They also admit that most of this growth has gone to welfare programs. But it just is not enough. They divide the budget into two broad groups of programs:

> social welfare spending, which includes education, social security, health care, unemployment, welfare and housing; and nonsocial welfare, which includes military spending, police and prisons, highway construction, interest on the national debt and subsidies to agriculture.

In doing this, they make some interest-

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ing distinctions. Why do not subsidies to agriculture count with other subsidies as social welfare? They are, after all, transfer payments meant to preserve the family farm. However, farmers are not part of the welfare coalition. They are independent and capitalistic with old-fashioned values. This liberal trio is not interested in such people. The same attitude comes through in references to reindustrialization. The authors would like to cash in on the widespread concern over the decline in the country's industrial base by blaming business and by arguing that government planning would be more effective. But their program is aimed at something different. They do not wish to advance industry or technology since these sectors employ "skilled white male workers already in great demand and earning high wages." They envision expanding social services to fulfill "unmet needs" (one of those listed in their Economic Bill of Rights is cable TV at rates the poor can afford) and to provide jobs filled disproportionately by women and minority-group members. The consumers of such services are the poor; thus affirmative action meets redistribution under central planning.

The authors turn the definition of public goods on its head. Those programs which benefit society as a whole, the true public goods, are consigned to the "nonsocial welfare" category. Apparently, defending the nation against crime or invasion provides little utility, nor does the provision of capital infrastructure. Only education counts, which testifies to the extent that the education establishment has become a tool of liberalism. The legitimate functions of government are to be curtailed. Only programs for the correct special interests are true public goods? And redistribution is only part of the program: democracy is to be extended throughout the economy. Democratic planning means:

> that investment policy at the local and national level will no longer be dominated by a few concentrated industries that control vast sums of capital, nor solely by private banks and insurance companies. There will be more emphasis on democratic participation—at the community level, the plant level, at the level of national economic policy.

Carnoy, Shearer, and Rumberger do not hesitate to call for the nationalization of pension funds, major banks, and insurance companies; nor do they shrink from advocating worker ownership and management of industry, consumer control of production, and community control of business. Capitalism would be essentially dead because private capital would cease to exist. What was not taxed away or borrowed to finance budget deficits (already, deficits absorb half of all private savings) would be controlled directly by government planners. Democratic planning is to control local and state governments as well as the national government. At the local level, legislation would be aimed at preventing business mobility and enforcing full employment by fiat.

There is a certain internal logic to this program. The massive redistribution program would almost assuredly cause the collapse of the private sector. One need only consider how much the economy has already been weakened by redistribution programs. To control the consequences of this, government would be compelled to expand its control over the entire system. Efficiency, productivity, and growth would be jettisoned as goals, but full employment and equality could be mandated with a lower overall standard of living. Since this would all be done by "democratic" means, who could argue that the revolution was illegitimate? Vox populi, vox Dei!

The authors base their electoral hopes on a "rainbow coalition" of minorities, women, poor and low-income workers, unions, and the "new class" of service professionals. Since half of the population is, by definition, below average in income, and many of the top half are enthralled by liberal ideology, there is a potential majority in such a coalition. They cite a handful of victories in the 1970's as harbingers of the new age which will follow the defeat of Ronald Reagan. They tie their plans to the success of the Democratic Party through grass-roots organizing and voter-registration drives among the poor, the unemployed, and minorities. This strategy resembles that used by the far left within the British Labour Party, as does their use of the term "social contract." Perhaps they will be just as successful. Then this book, instead of being a manifesto for a new regime, will become, like its Labour counterpart, referred to by many as "the longest suicide note in history."

In the Mail

Graham Greene **by John Spurling; Methuen; New York.** A few dozen pages for those who have little time for scholarship as "entertainments" beckon.

The Penny Capitalists: A Study of Nineteenth-Century Working-Class Entrepreneurs **by John Benson; Rutgers University Press; New Brunswick, NJ.** A book with insights like: "For the man with ambition, however, starting to fish generally meant wanting to acquire a boat of his own."

Tell About the South: The Southern Rage to Explain **by Fred Hobson; Louisiana State University Press; Baton Rouge, LA.** Hobson is in a long line of eloquent Southerners.

The Brink of All We Hate: English Satires on Women, 1660-1750 **by Felicity A. Nussbaum; University Press of Kentucky; Lexington, KY.** Misogyny revisited.

The Invention of Flight **by Susan Neville; University of Georgia Press; Athens, GA.** One in this collection of stories opens, "All that Illinois winter she'd been afraid of a coming ice age." Perceptive.

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Richard Cornuelle is repulsed by the schemes of liberals like Carnoy, Shearer, and Rumberger. To Cornuelle, past programs that have expanded the public sector are responsible for the continuing economic crisis. He defines the crisis in both social and economic terms, though he devotes most of his space to the latter. The policies that were originally sold as measures to increase stability have actually produced the instabilities of inflation and unemployment.

The Great Depression ushered in the age of the economist, perhaps because it made it clear to all that disruptions in the economy could create widespread and persistent hardship on a massive scale. Thus the prevention of such disruptions became a major goal of government policy. Voters demanded it. With the classical economists in eclipse, the new theories of Lord Keynes moved into the vacuum. Cornuelle does a good job of demolishing the specifics of Keynesian theory, particularly the notion that modern capitalist economies generate excessive savings. Keynes, disheartened by the depression, came to believe that economic progress was at an end, that there would be no new investment opportunities. And this on the eve of the greatest age of technological and industrial advances in human history! Keynes converted a temporary problem into a *General Theory.*

Once the government moved into the relief of unemployment, the pressure to move beyond, into other forms of hardship relief, was powerful. It was not inevitable. The attempt to provide stability can be considered in the same category as other public goods; the idea of redistribution to promote equality is logically and philosophically quite different. Keynesian theory made it easier to make that jump, which explains its continued popularity among liberals despite its flaws. As Keynes himself asserted:

> our argument leads toward the conclusion that in contemporary conditions the growth of wealth so far from being dependent on the abstinence of the rich, as is commonly supposed, is more likely impeded by it. One of the chief social justifications of great inequality of wealth is, therefore, removed.

This gave the egalitarians an opening which other methods of stabilization, such as monetary policy, did not provide. Unfortunately, Cornuelle does not come fully to grips with this.

Cornuelle proposes a return to private efforts to replace government programs. The idea of privatization of government service is popular in many circles, but it avoids the main issue. In the larger scheme of things, it matters little whether the garbage is picked up by a truck owned by a municipality or a private firm. Liberals do not really care very much for services like this, anyway. Their thrust is towards redistribution, not public goods. Reagan has cut many services, including quite a few which would normally be considered legitimate government projects. But the "safety net" of welfare continues to expand and with it all of the dangerous consequences.

For the relief of hardship, Cornuelle recommends a return to private charity and volunteer social work. The American people are the most generous in the world. Prior to the 1930's, poor relief was a matter of charity and local efforts. Yet no one can seriously maintain that these efforts would produce the same level of funding as does the current welfare state. Charity is meant to help the poor within the framework of traditional society. It is a moral act of the donor, not a right of the recipient. It does not change the social relationship. Redistribution is meant to revolutionize society in the name of equality. Traditional distinctions are to be overturned and branded as unjust. The gulf between these two views of the social order make their respective advocates into deadly adversaries.

Cornuelle argues that government policy disintegrates society, but the bulk of his case is still made on the economic costs of that policy. This can be a successful tactic, but conservatism can never be secure within such a limitation. Conservatives must return to the position that certain things are immune to determination by majority vote. The government does *not* have the right to reorder people's property, wealth, or income at will or to restructure society to fit some subjective ideal. The government's duty is to protect the right of people to be unequal, as long as the methods they use are not themselves illegal within the traditional framework of law. The scope of politics must be limited if the reach of government is to be limited. □

Notables

Words

"But you are already becoming impatient, you're already preparing to jettison the whole thing, to throw it in the dustbin, wrapped in one of those specially-made bags: a torrent of words issuing from 'an interminable windbag' . . . ." So writes Nathalie Sarraute in *The Use of Speech* (George Braziller; New York). The same sort of feeling—impatience, that is—is evoked by Sarraute's *Childhood* (George Braziller; New York), which is not so much an "autobiographical slice-of-life" as it is an "autobiographical compilation of memory-bearing words." As Sarraute puts it in one passage: "Here they are again, these words, they have come to life again, just as living, just as potent as they were at that moment, such a long time ago, when they penetrated me." Of course, childhood is a labyrinth: who, years later, can know if the direction, the tack, the approach is the correct one, know beyond doubt? No one. But still people try. As filmmaker Federico Fellini once said, "It is necessary to understand childhood as the possibility of maintaining an equilibrium between the unconscious and the conscious, between 'real' life and the life of memory." Both of Sarraute's lives have been in words. The medium has been good to her. □

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Antics at the Bar

Robert Pack: *Edward Bennett Williams for the Defense;* Harper & Row; New York.

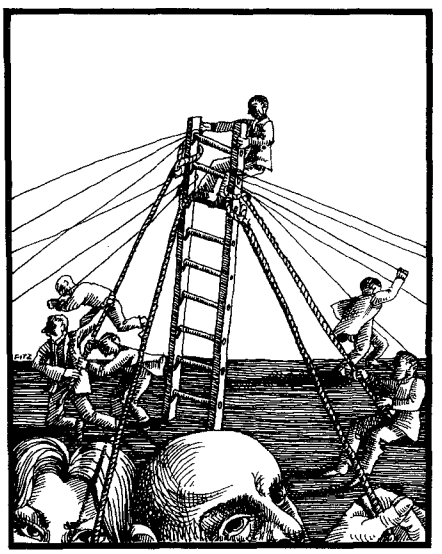
***The Burger Court: The Counter-Revolution That Wasn't;* Edited by Vincent Blasi; Yale University Press; New Haven, CT.**

by Edward Peters

In the late 1950's conservatives came to understand the importance of the liberal's commitment to methodology. Although the right had already launched a telling critique of the *content* of liberalism, these critiques frequently missed a key to liberal thought in the United States: its exaltation of form over matter. As a popular jingle from the early days of the New Deal put it: "We may not know where we're going, but we're on our way!" Imagine being able to offer such a feeble defense of the nation's greatest social experiment—and getting away with it.

The great energy—spiritual, intellectual, industrial, and commercial—which America has unleashed upon the world has consistently been guided by pragmatism over principle, method over content, and efficiency over verity. This is not to say that the American system does not shower upon her people—and the world—extraordinary benefits, but to suggest that such benefits are conferred despite the absence of a systematic philosophy and that what America does might be done better if the country were to accept the possibility of and to commit itself to a valid statement of guiding principle.

De Tocqueville observed that in America every political question is at last resolved into a legal question. Today, every social, cultural, and even theological question seems cast as a political question—and then into a legal question. This, coupled with a disproportionately high number of lawyers, makes the United States one of the most litigious polities since the late Roman Empire. An office worker becomes ill from cigarette smoke; a priest wants to redecorate his church; a youngster is hurt when an opposing player violates a game rule; such trivial cases, and thousands like them, are thrust each year into the courts for resolution.



With such a heavy national dependency upon the courts, the principles (or *attitudes*) which guide our courts assume even greater importance. The Federal courts, at all levels, are dominated by liberalism, as are many state courts in the so-called leading jurisdictions. The primary manifestation of liberalism in law is legal positivism, a "philosophy" which *denies* the existence of external legal principles and thus absolves a court from any necessary responsibility to square its decision with basic morality, logical coherence, or metaphysical reality. But nature abhors a vacuum. Something must guide court decisions in the studied absence of accepted legal principles. When legal considerations are wanting, political policy will fill the void. Hence the rise in American jurisprudence of a legal pragmatism of a definitely liberal bent, and of a decidedly shortsighted nature.

It must be stressed again that the foregoing is not a condemnation of pragmatism nor a denigration of form in public policy. Many public questions are properly questions of expediency and do not raise problems of fundamental principle. But the pivotal questions and cases are usually questions of principle. A mistake here adversely affects an untold number of lesser, but cumulatively vital, decisions. In the short run, this blindness to principle results in local travesties such as the acquittal of Jimmy Hoffa won by Edward Bennett Williams, and national tragedies as in the case of the Burger Court's legalization of abortion. In the long run, this deference to temporary facility is unable to meet the arguments of radical liberalism, communism, or legal positivism, or to check the assault which such ideologies have launched upon the Christian West. This absence of a coherent legal philosophy —a valid schema against which to measure the concrete act—is what makes evaluation of individuals like Edward Bennett Williams or institutions like the Burger Court so difficult. One is reduced, as were Robert Pack and Blasi's essayists, to drawing conclusions based on little more than personal predilections.

Admittedly, Williams's effectiveness as an attorney is hardly paralleled—even taking into account that the prime years for Williams's defense work (the late 1950's to early 1970's) were not exactly banner years for the successful prosecution of criminals. One's discomfort with Williams turns not on his effectiveness as an advocate, but on some of the dubious characters who benefitted by Williams's work: Jimmy Hoffa, Frank Costello, and Adam Clayton Powell, to name a few. This discomfort changes to indignation when some of Williams's defense "techniques" are considered.

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Although Williams denies, for example, racial orchestration of the Jimmy Hoffa jury, the fact remains that his selections worked to impanel a heavily black jury. He also denies—despite his repeated public profession of demanding "total control" of any case he accepts—having asked Joe Louis to show up in court, or of having Hoffa (with the judge not yet present) put his arm around the noted black boxer and chat in view of the jury. Nor does he admit to having prior knowledge that a black newspaper depicting Hoffa as the friend of black unions would be sent to the jury during the trial, or to having sinister motives when he brought to the attention of the black jury the fact that the state's chief witness against Hoffa had at one time done some undercover investigations of the NAACP.

Obviously, having seemingly destroyed this witness's reputation for honesty in still another courtroom ploy did not deter Williams, just three weeks later, from calling upon this same witness as part of Williams's defense of gangster Frank Costello against deportation. And Williams saw no conflict of interest when he, while serving as defense counsel for Adam Clayton Powell, also appeared as counsel for the star prosecution witness against Powell. This little trick destroyed the state's ability to prepare the witness for trial, as Williams would have attended every such session. The question in such cases is, had the roles been reversed, how many such antics would *Williams* have tolerated without raising objection, moving for mistrial, or running to the press? Or is the only rule in court to get away with as much as opposing counsel will allow?

According to Pack, Williams does not concern himself with his client's morality or immorality, or even guilt or innocence. His sole object seems little more than to prevent conviction of his client. One would be hard put to find a clearer case of concentration on form over content. But some serious questions may be raised against what is admittedly a widespread attitude on the part of lawyers.

Williams justifies his defense of such notorious characters by saying that the Sixth Amendment guarantees *all* accused persons the right to counsel. Indeed it does. But Williams—and he is far from alone here—seems to read into that amendment the right, if not the obligation, to use *any* means at his disposal (short of perjury, bribery, or rank dishonesty) to exonerate his client. This, I suggest, is inconsistent with the lawyer's responsibility as an officer of the court.

Courts of law were established to administer justice. To the extent that they fail to do justice, they fail in their only reason for existence. Likewise, to the extent that prosecution, defense, judge, or jury fail to advance justice, they fail in their responsibility to the courts and to society. This is not to say that the defense should join in the prosecution of the accused. The defense's duty is to require the state *to prove its case* against individuals; but that is far different from saying that the defense's duty is *to prevent conviction* of the client. The former policy allows even the most despicable criminal the assistance of an able attorney; but the latter incites public anger against the courts, and brings contempt upon the legal profession. Yet, the problems which confront the individual in the practice of law are due in large part to the problems hampering the courts themselves as they search for purpose and direction in their deliberations.

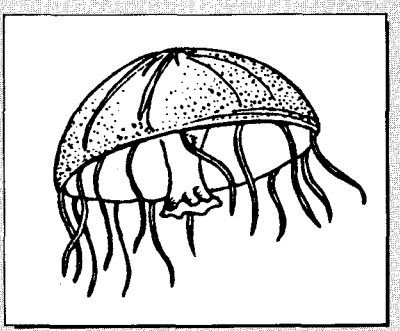
In light of the liberal preoccupation with form, it should not surprise us that when Vincent Blasi sees the Burger Court strike down provisions in Federal statutes 24 times (as opposed to the Warren Court striking down 19 provisions) he concludes that the Burger Court is necessarily an "activist" (read: praiseworthy) Court. But the Warren Court was activist not because it struck down Federal legislation per se, but because it substituted its own *political* preferences for those of Congress. What Blasi and most of his essayists overlook is the possibility that when the Burger Court strikes down a Federal provision today, it might well be trying to reestab-

LIBERAL CULTURE

Closed Circuit

Mr. William Kennedy, a writer lavishly honored last year with both the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award, recently wrote an enthusiastic review, published by the *New York Times Book Review*, of a book by Mr. Mario Cuomo, the liberal governor of New York.

> I voted for Mario Cuomo for Governor of New York in 1982 because I liked what he was saying and because I thought his opponent, Lewis E. Lehrman, was a social Luddite and a moral troglodyte.
>
> I was predisposed to like both him and his book since he wrote me a fan letter saying he'd stayed up all night reading my last novel, 'Ironweed.'



How neat and smooth! How could an author who so forcefully shaped and vocally proclaimed such political convictions miss a Pulitzer or the Critics Circle distinction? Would those august bodies ever refuse their highest recognition to such a reliable thinker? □

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lish a stricter interpretation of the Constitution which would help return the Federal government to its rightful limited role. For example, *National League of Cities* v. *Usury,* which Blasi offers as an example of judicial activism, is precisely an exercise in strict Constitutional interpretation. Here the Burger Court, bucking 40 years of liberal momentum, held that Congress had exceeded its authority under the hitherto disregarded corpse of the commerce clause and breathed life into the dormant Tenth Amendment as one remaining check against continuing Federal encroachments on state and local autonomy. Paying attention to the *content* of the Burger Court decisions, instead of simply their form, gives us a more accurate picture of contemporary jurisprudence.

The preceding notwithstanding, we must yet conclude the Burger Court to be an activist Court, though not for the reasons Blasi *et alia* suggest, and certainly not to the egregious degree of the Warren Court. The Burger Court will go down in history as the Abortion Court. However, as seriously as the Burger Court has sinned by commission, these cases are blessedly few. Where the Burger Court really earns its title as activist is in its easy acquiescence in the legacy of the Warren Court.

The "rootless activism," as Blasi puts it, of the Burger Court has left intact "the great activist trilogy of the Warren years —*Brown* v. *Board of Education* (school desegregation) *Reynolds* v. *Sims* (reapportionment) and *Miranda* v. *Arizona* (confessions)." So too, a second echelon of cases remains basically in place: *New York Times* (relaxed libel law for the press), *Mapp* (search and seizure restrictions), *Griswold* (contraception expansion), *Engel* (school prayer prohibition) and *Baker* (reapportionment regulation). All of these activist pillars stand, allegedly in the name of judicial self-restraint. It is amazing how quickly the Court and its commentators have rediscovered *stare decisis* and the doctrine of deference to precedent—the very rules trampled in the rush to establish the new policies of these cases. So far at least, only Justice Rehnquist seems aware of the hypocrisy.

Ironically, even here, in their professed respect for precedent, the Court and most commentators show themselves yet again to be placing form over content. The respect for precedent was never an end in jurisprudence; it was simply a means to a greater end. It was a method whereby long-established and well-working rules would not be lightly overthrown in the name of temporary expediency; it was never intended to memorialize into national policy the fancy of nine passing men.

"Rootless activism," says Blasi, "is activism nonetheless." If we can agree then that the deliberations of the Burger Court are rootless, and that the machinations of attorneys like Edward Bennett Williams are without apparent guidance, it then becomes time to ask whether this state of affairs is an acceptable one, and if it is not, to begin seriously considering what should be done about it. □

The Arty Life

Frances Spalding: *Vanessa Bell;* Ticknor & Fields; New York.

Karen Monson: *Alma Mahler: Muse to Genius: From Fin-de-Siècle Vienna to Hollywood's Heyday;* Houghton Mifflin; Boston.

by Gregory Wolfe

Women are in many ways the bearers and keepers of culture. However excluded they may have been from becoming artists in their own right, women throughout history have shown a remarkable capacity for surrounding themselves with art and for creating an environment in which art can flourish. From the wives of Roman patricians to the bustling patronesses in their salons during the last three centuries, art and ideas have found hospitality and thrived. Like any good thing, however, the relation of women (and men, for that matter) to art has its characteristic perversion. In a secularized society, art easily becomes a substitute for religion, an end in itself rather than a means toward the enhancement of the human spirit. Art can even become a substitute for life, acting as an emotional crutch that provides an escape from the daunting realities of daily life. For Vanessa Bell and Alma Mahler the life of art may have been a vocation, but it also acted as insulation, shielding them from both their personal anxieties and from the harsh and confusing events of the 20th century. Art for art's sake has always produced a curiously enervated and often trivialized sensibility; neither Vanessa Bell nor Alma Mahler escaped from this condition.

Long after they initially came together, those forming the Bloomsbury set hovered around Vanessa Bell, biographer Frances Spalding says, "attracted by the atmosphere of tolerance and freedom which, with her easy control over domestic matters and her scorn of accepted conventions, she helped to create." Even more than her painting, Spalding celebrates the domestic calm which Vanessa carried with her to Sussex, France, and to the elegant Georgian squares of Bloomsbury. Although she appeared to be a low-key matriarch and a spurner of conventions, Vanessa Bell led a life replete with ironies and contradictions to which Spalding appears oblivious. The mythology connected with the Bloomsbury Group has clouded the historical record. When its critics accuse Bloomsbury of a virtual monopoly on the discussion of

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ideas during the first half of the century, Bloomsbury's defenders fume impatiently, arguing that a small group of

private individuals who never sought public office could hardly be termed a conspiracy. The truth lies in between.

Bloomsbury liked to think of itself as a small enclave of culture in the midst of boors and barbarians, a gnostic group of unconventional people who were far ahead of their time. In fact, they were as much creatures of their time as anyone could be. Before the British Empire collapsed, the British spirit had already done so. Without the moral and historical sense which the older generations had taken for granted, the young began to cringe before the confident, public, duty-oriented Edwardians. As historian Paul Johnson notes in his *Modern Times*, the new spirit was epitomized in the secret, elite society at Cambridge University known as the Apostles, who were diffident, retiring, unaggressive, agnostic, and critical of grandiose schemes; more concerned with personal than public duties, they cultivated introspection and friendship. Its philosophy came from G. E. Moore's *Principia Ethica,* which extolled hedonism based on friendships, and its propagandist was Lytton Strachey, whose *Eminent Victorians* vilified the Blimps and Grundys of Victoria's reign. The homosexuality and pacificism of Bloomsbury were retreats from the challenges of affirmation, sacrifice, and commitment. It was, above all, Bloomsbury's corrosive cynicism that provided relief to those who couldn't support British institutions; the cynical climate of ideas which blames "conventions" as obstacles to the good society is a legacy which is very much with us.

Vanessa Bell embodies the paradoxes of Bloomsbury: she was as much a creature of late-Victorian culture as she was of the avant-garde. She and her sister, Virginia Woolf, were daughters of Leslie Stephen, the biographer and historian of ideas. In his home, both Vanessa and Virginia had the leisure and the encouragement to develop their respective artistic skills. Stephen was a pampered man, and he needed women to soothe and take care of him—first his wife, and after her death, his eldest daughter, and when she died, Vanessa. Though she may have loathed the tiring responsibilities of hostess, Vanessa remembered her parents' lawn parties with artists and writers, and the joys of family life; she was to pattern her whole life around them. Vanessa Bell scorned marriage, but as Spalding notes, she was "voraciously maternal," perhaps in compensation. Stephen's frugality also enabled him to provide his daughters with money. Like her Bloomsbury associates, Vanessa never lacked; their wealth and connections helped to keep them insulated from the outside world.

As a painter, Vanessa rebelled against the traditional "Academy" type of realism, which had degenerated into a dull assimilation of tired formulas. Like many of her peers, Vanessa also detested the "literary" or "narrative" art which the British were fond of, and held that art need neither teach nor improve to be valuable. For a time she came under the influence of John Singer Sargent, but the

In the forthcoming issue of *Chronicles of Culture*

The Ingersoll Prizes 1984

"The left never tires of mocking conservatives for clinging to the gossamer glories of a past that never existed. To the contrary, the conservative loves the past for its quotidian reality, its concreteness and palpability, its practical wisdom that arises out of the experiences of countless men and women who have loved and hated, sorrowed and rejoiced, lived and died. The conservative needs no mythic or legendary past to sustain him, but his antagonists do; for all their prattle about the future, leftists prefer to escape the frustrations of the present by retreating imaginatively into a golden age of the past."

—from "The Radical Virus"
by James J. Thompson, Jr.

ALSO

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Perceptibles—The American Proscenium—Journalism—Notables
Screen—Music—Confluences—Liberal Culture

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most lasting influence on Vanessa was the Post-Impressionists, who shocked the Edwardians when they viewed the major show arranged by Roger Fry in 1912. What appealed to her was the use of color and of underlying form to construct space and bring out relationships. Most of Vanessa's early work is clearly derivative, employing the stock subjects, such as bathers or haystacks.

The horror of World War I caused British artists to forsake abstraction and to return to representational art. But the war hardly touched Bloomsbury: the men became farm laborers to avoid conscription, and simply ignored the carnage. Vanessa's personal life in the following years was to manifest an emotional uncertainty that is reflected in her paintings. Her marriage to Clive Bell was soon over: essentially a lightweight, impresario of art, he could not hold Vanessa's attention. A short affair with Roger Fry, a more intellectual impresario, could not be sustained because his aggressive, fast-paced life conflicted with her desire for a static existence. Her love for the homosexual artist Duncan Grant could never be returned, but she clung to him and looked up to him as a Master, all the time deprecating her own talents. Ultimately, this apparently unperturbable matriarch was a deeply insecure woman, emotionally dependent on her children and the man whom she considered a genius.

Vanessa Bell and the other Bloomsbury artists illustrate T. S. Eliot's concept of the "dissociation of sensibility," the disjunction between head and heart. Vanessa practiced the Bloomsbury penchant for "detachment," a corollary of its supposed freedom from illusions. One of the results of this is evident in a painful, late self-portrait which reveals the unfulfilled old woman.

In addition to painting, Vanessa's other achievement is in the decorative arts, stemming from her work with Roger Fry's Omega Workshops and her lifelong collaboration with Duncan Grant. Here again, Bloomsbury paradoxes abound: the socially progressive set practicing the most *bourgeois* of art forms, decorating fabrics, dinnerware, and the walls of the well-to-do. In these designs "detachment" is thrown to the winds: they are light and rhythmic, often in soft pastel colors—an obvious reaction against the heavy reds and blacks of a late-Victorian childhood. The Omega Workshop, in effect, is the direct ancestor of the sheet and pillowcase department at Bloomingdales.

Vanessa Bell had a simple dignity about her, so that even in her gypsy-like, casual appearance, she carried herself with a natural grace. Alma Mahler was always a sophisticate by comparison, "the most beautiful girl" in turn-of-the-century Vienna, when it was the cultural capital of the world. Alma Mahler had something of the "grand lady" about her throughout her life. Except for a few songs written while she was a music student, Alma Mahler produced no art. But like Vanessa Bell, she was drawn to artistic circles and provided an atmosphere of feminine hospitality and stimulation which made her company itself desirable. The subtitle of Karen Monson's biography reveals the book's raison d'être: "Muse to Genius." The story of Alma Mahler would, it seems, be about the grand lady of culture, whose beauty and vivacity inspired a dozen of Europe's greatest artistic geniuses, and whose passions and sufferings are a testament to an intensely lived existence. Unfortunately, when the facts are presented, the reality is rather more sordid.

Daughter of the successful landscape painter J. E. Schindler, Alma had all the advantages of Leslie Stephen's daughters. She was an industrious music student who managed to captivate (though not through music) the director of the Vienna Opera, Gustav Mahler, who pursued and won her. Mahler's single-minded devotion to music was hard on Alma, though later in their marriage he recognized this and made a gallant effort to make amends. Sadly, Alma never understood her husband's music, and during their marriage she began a lifelong habit: convincing herself that she would be happy with some man other than the one she was with. After Mahler's death the painter Oskar Kokoschka became her lover, and when she became pregnant by him, she aborted the child. She sought out the architect Walter Gropius, the founder of the Bauhaus—whom she had been tempted to have an affair with while still married

In the Mail

***Christianity and Philosophy* by Keith E. Yandell; Wm. B. Eerdmans; Grand Rapids, MI.** "An exercise in the philosophy of religion." *Exercise* is the right word.

***What You Have at Stake in the 1984 Election* by Guy Vander Jagt; Green Hill; Ottawa, IL.** Certainly, President Reagan has "protected your dollar's purchasing power," but how can we account for this not-well-made, 90-page book that costs $3.50?

***How to Get Off Drugs* by the Editors of *Rolling Stone*; Simon & Schuster; New York.** The editors make a grandiose assumption: that the target audience is literate.

***An American Idol: Emerson and the "Jewish Idea"* by Robert J. Loewenberg; University Press of America; Washington, DC.** The author is probably correct on at least one count: "I cannot suppose that a book critical of liberalism, and especially of its greatest American spokesman and patron, Emerson, will be well received by academic intellectuals."

***Decision Making in the Supreme Court of the United States: A Political and Behavioral View* by Joseph F. Menez; University Press of America; Washington, DC.** Although the footnotes and other bibliographical equipment take up at least as much of the book as the prose, the vignettes themselves are more engaging than the title might suggest.

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to Mahler—married him, and left him about a year later for the young poet Franz Werfel. Even with Werfel, the author of once-popular novels like *The 40 Days of Musa Dagh,* she wondered whether she wouldn't be happier with Kokoschka after all. In the years leading up to World War II, Alma's anti-Semitism became more pronounced, causing her to be exceedingly ambivalent about her marriages to two Jews, Mahler and Werfel. Alma quickly became a fascist by conviction, though not an activist. Driven to exile by the war, she and Werfel went to California, where he died in 1945. Alma stayed in America, and died at age 85.

This summary of Alma Mahler's life is somewhat brutal, emphasizing many of the least attractive facts of her life; nothing is said of her commitment to art, her capacity for genuine love, the exuberance which led Kokoschka to call her a "wild brat" on her 70th birthday. All of these traits were real, and deserve to be remembered. But like Vanessa Bell, Alma Mahler wandered through the 20th century, clutching to herself the art which couldn't rid her of her problems. That her life story should be told and reflected upon is fair and praiseworthy; that the moral drawn from that story is a sentimentalized paean to the "muse of genius" is not. □

Missing Pieces

George W. Hunt: *John Cheever: The Hobgoblin Company of Love;* Wm. B. Eerdmans; Grand Rapids, MI.

by Joseph Schwartz

The Rev. George W. Hunt, S.J., literary editor of *America,* has written a valuable study of the fiction of John Cheever, one that will remain a source of lasting value for future critics and scholars to consult. However, I have reservations about Hunt's study, all having to do with his methodology. For example, the technique of comparison is applied in too many instances without profit. Any literary work can be compared to any other, and any literary work can be criticized by placing any philosophical system as a grid over it. I do not mean, of course, that comparison is not vital. Analysis and comparison are the basic tools of any critical method. The value of comparison depends, however, upon a kind of tact, the ability to determine when it fits and when it is essential. Hunt writes of a relationship between Kierkegaard's philosophy and Cheever's fiction, which *seems* accurate, but which

is without real substance.

The principal virtue of Hunt's study is its general thesis: Cheever's religious faith is central to an understanding of his work. Hunt makes it quite clear that Cheever was a traditional believing Christian who described himself as a "liturgical churchgoer." There was nothing exotic or individualistic in his beliefs, except, of course, that there is nothing more exotic than Christianity itself. At the center of Cheever's description of the profane world is the great mystery of original sin, a comforting doctrine, I have come to believe, judging by the consequences of accepting other options to explain the meaning of the wound in creation. His fables are complex—rich and full of tension—precisely because of his knowledge of this mystery. One profound result of this knowledge is Cheever's willingness to accept life's otherwise unexplainable contradictions, his poise.

Hunt emphasizes Cheever's vigorous acceptance of the first article of the Creed, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth." Hunt points out that the Maker and His makings "are the recurring theme in his work." It is from this profound conviction that his second central belief, "trusting in the Lord," emerges. Being pilgrims, we have no choice but to trust in Him while we weave our way between Eros and Thanatos, doing our filial best to steadfastly honor tradition, sacrifice, duty, and ceremony. Saul Bellow, his friend, might well have been thinking of Cheever and some others like him when, in his Nobel Prize Address, he rejected the assertion of our nothingness, insisting instead that "we are Something." What John Updike, another friend and admirer, had so firmly embedded in his memory of Cheever's work was the idea that our lives at every moment are littered "with clues to the supernatural."

While some critics, after the appearance of *Falconer,* recognized that faith was central to Cheever's work, most continued to write about Cheever as if irony (or even scorn) was the key to his view of things. Identifying Cheever as the light-mannered and light-styled chronicler of exurbia unfortunately characterized him in such a way as to blind readers to the vision upon which the narratives rested. Those critics who suggested that moral concerns were at the center of his vision were closer to the truth. A complete understanding of his moral view, however, was hindered by their failure to perceive the religious base on which it rested. Hunt rightly insists that the theological base upon

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which the moral code depends is essential. His determination to "trace some moral chain of being" would have been a failure had he not had a solid Christian base. He would have merely recapitulated the work of so many American writers who have tried to separate man's good from God's superintending providence. Cheever wrote,

> The religious experience is very much my concern, as it seems to me it is the legitimate concern of any adult who has experienced love.

"Who will sound the alarm?" is one of his great questions, and the answer is that he himself will. He liked the German sound of *"Ich habe etwas zu sagen."* What he had to say is succinctly stated by one of his most memorable characters:

> Stand up straight. Admire the world. Relish the love of a gentle woman. Trust in the Lord.

The complex ontology implied in these few sentences is comprehensive.

Hunt alerts us to the rhetorical problem that Cheever faced, the same one that other believing writers (Walker Percy, Saul Bellow, John Updike) face in a culture saturated with a mixture of defensive skepticism and its natural opposite, silly beliefs in frivolities. Consider this passage from *Falconer,* a book which Cheever pointed to as the key to his artistic efforts:

> as croyants, I'm sure we share the knowledge that to profess exalted religious experience outside the ecclesiastical paradigm is to make of oneself an outcast. . . . I truly believe in One God the Father Almighty but I know that to say so loudly, and at any distance from the chancel—any distance at all—would dangerously jeopardize my ability to ingratiate those men and women with whom I wish to live. I am trying to say—and I'm sure you will agree with me—that while we are available to transcendent experience, we can state this only at the suitable and ordained place. I could not live without this knowledge; no more could I live without the thrilling possibility of suddenly encountering the fragrance of skepticism.

Hunt comments, "Cheever knows well that we live in a world that seldom admits to [his] basic beliefs."

One might argue that Cheever's strategy was wrong, that Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited,* for example, is superior to *Falconer* precisely because Waugh discovered that direct rhetoric is more effective. Nevertheless, the fact remains that Cheever was not describing a unique situation. He was referring precisely to the rhetorical problem faced, for instance, by T. S. Eliot in writing *The Waste Land* or *The Cocktail Party.* In the poem and in the play Eliot had to devise a rhetorical strategy which would startle (or shame or shock) his readers into taking a fresh look at the obvious truths of the penny catechism. Such a strategy takes the risk of making the glass so dark that it cannot be seen through at all. By putting the passage quoted above in a late work, *Falconer,* Cheever, however, may have been signaling a change in his rhetorical strategy, evident also, I think, in *Oh What a Paradise It Seems.* It is paradoxically a passage which speaks with a directness that the passage itself asserts should not be used in fiction.

The rhetorical strategy of hiding the message is most evident in the short stories, even to a fault perhaps. There are few friends of the reader in them to direct him to the ultimate religious base on which the wry observations rest. The stories are based upon a Christian assumption about the nature of things which many readers and critics have unfortunately missed. It would now appear that his often-noted melancholy was the result of the contrast between what is and what might be, a sign of a standard at work, not merely the result of sadness and nostalgia.

Several other truths in the canon of Cheever's beliefs are also likely to be missed in his work. There is man and his original sin. But that is not the whole story. There is also "Valor! Love! Virtue! Splendor! Kindness! Wisdom! Beauty!" Further, this is a writer who is not ashamed to admire decency and whose mark of maturity is his knowledge that the piper must always be paid, so that the whining that passes for wisdom in the work of others is put in its place. Just as F. Scott Fitzgerald used the stars, jewelry, and all glittering objects as images of wonder, so Cheever uses and loves light: "It seems to me almost that one's total experience is the drive toward light." Ultimately, this light is the Holy Spirit, just as it was for Eliot. "The constants that I look for are a love of light and a determination to trace some moral chain of being." He is a writer who sees that freedom is "for" not "from," and that we are essentially free precisely "for" rejoicing. When Farruget in *Falconer* walks away from prison he exclaims, "Rejoice"—one of "the strongest words in the English language." Put "Rejoice" alongside "Life is a perilous moral journey" and you have the essentials of Cheever.

His work contains an implied political philosophy that puts many formal models to shame. He salutes the flag of the world: "To scorn one's world is despicable." Without that fundamental condition, all attempts at philosophizing are pointless. At the minimum he expects decency which can lead the way

Fleeting Truths

Charles Trueheart, media "critic" for the "newspaper" *U.S.A. Today,* writing in that sheet about what makes news news:

> A reporter's muscular and idiosyncratic consciousness makes the difference between bad journalism and good: what he selects and what he omits, what he explores and what he only mentions, how he begins and ends.

What about truth? □

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toward love. In between are our human failures and our good-hearted attempts to correct them. And Tiresias is always around to advise us. As a thoughtless shopper in the supermarket pushes her loaded cart through the aisle restricted to "Nine Items or Less," an old man objects:

> I just can't stand to see someone take advantage of other people's kindness. It's like fascism. It isn't that she's breaking the law. It's just that most of us are too nice to do anything about it. Why do you suppose they put up a sign that says nine items? It's to make the store more efficient for everyone. You're just like a shoplifter only you're not stealing groceries, you're stealing time, you're not stealing from the management, you're stealing from us. People like you cause wars.

The final sentence speaks a political wisdom that reverberates through our soul. Politics is at base the total complex of relations between men. It is not an abstraction which dehumanizes our community. If we understand what Cheever's Tiresias is saying in this instance, we have come a long way toward understanding what makes the body politic work. The single passage above contains more wisdom about politics and on a deeper level than all of the pathetic attempts of Norman Mailer put together. □

Errant Idealism

John Milton Cooper, Jr.: *The Warrior and the Priest: Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt;* Harvard University Press; Boston.

Lloyd Gardner: *A Covenant with Power: America and World Order from Wilson to Reagan;* Oxford University Press; New York.

by Paul Gottfried

There have been many interpretations of Woodrow Wilson done from widely divergent perspectives. Fortunately for Wilson's reputation, his most prominent biographers—Arthur S. Link, Ray Stannard Baker, and John Morton Blum—have admired him profoundly. Our 28th President has fared better in this respect than others, such as Richard Nixon. Moreover, Nixon always had stormy relations with journalists and others claiming to represent "the conscience of America." It was this group which long idolized Wilson; perhaps in order to placate his enemies Nixon discovered Wilson as a presidential role model after his election in 1968. Wilson's admirers before the greening of American academy came typically from the moderate left, which applauded his commitment to economic reform and to fighting "German militarism." As a reformer and democratic Anglophile internationalist, Wilson exerted a kind of influence on FDR which liberal historians have been quick to note. They have failed to note, according to George Nash, that Herbert Hoover, and even John Foster Dulles, venerated Wilson far more than did Roosevelt. Wilson's belief that the United States had interests in Latin America, his cultural Anglophilia, his hatred for Soviet Bolshevism, and his view of the need for government to be an honest broker between labor and management were all points of contact between him and 20th-century American conservatives.

Despite Wilson's deserved reputation as a democratic idealist, he has recently lost favor with the intellectual left. The left identifies Anglo-American democracy with both big money and imperialism. The leftist Barbara Tuchman may still defend Wilson for fighting Kaiser Bill (whom, unlike Mao Tse Tung and Stalin, she considers to have been a wicked and aggressive tyrant). Yet to most leftist historians, particularly Lloyd Gardner, Wilson was an American imperialist who enjoyed abusing Mexicans.

The books by Cooper and Gardner do not shed new light on Wilson's career, but they tell us much about the attitudes of practicing historians toward a partially fallen, former liberal saint. Of the two works, *The Warrior and the Priest,* a comparative study of Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt, is clearly the more balanced. Cooper treats his subjects sympathetically. Though obviously familiar with psycho-history, Cooper does not apply it blatantly in contrasting the meditative, often hesitant intellectual Wilson to the bellicose patriot Teddy Roosevelt. The major confrontation between these leaders occurred during World War I, which Roosevelt wished to enter in 1914 but which Wilson stayed out of for almost three years. Both men were ardent Anglophiles and generally hostile to the Central Powers; yet while Roosevelt advertised his sympathies as soon as the guns of August had gone off, Wilson agonized over the prospect of going to war.

Cooper exaggerates the contrast between his subjects. Although Wilson as President was less pugnacious than Roosevelt as a private citizen, his attempt at neutrality was mostly fictitious. World War I revisionist historians, such as Harry Elmer Barnes and Charles Roger Tansill, easily exposed the one-sidedness of American neutrality. Their studies focus on the Wilson Administration after Edward M. House had replaced the more genuine neutralist William Jennings Bryan as Secretary of State in June 1915. Cooper is wrong in suggesting that Bryan, unlike Wilson, wanted peace with the Germans at any price. In a now-famous note to Wilson, after the

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sinking of the *Lusitania* in May 1915, Bryan reminded the President and by implication his two confidants, Edward House and Robert Lansing, what true American neutrality would have consisted of.

To understand the American interpretation of neutrality, it is necessary, as George Kennan and John Lukács have suggested, to look at the cultural factors that shaped political decisions. Wilson, House, Lansing, and Roosevelt all identified themselves strongly with British civilization. Wilson, who admired the English parliamentary system and the 19th-century Prime Minister William Gladstone, repeatedly stressed the shared Anglo-American heritage. He, House, and Lansing associated themselves eagerly with the Imperial School, which flourished at Yale, Harvard, and Princeton around the turn of the century. This historical school explained the American Revolution as an unfortunate blunder, caused by hotheads like Thomas Jefferson and Sam Adams in the colonies and by the cabinet government of Lord North in England. The dean of the Imperial School, Charles Louis Beer, was one of Wilson's advisers who went with him to the postwar conference at Versailles. It may be hard for Americans to realize any longer the depth and prevalence of Anglophilia in early 20th-century America. Despite the German, Irish, Scandinavian, and Central European immigrations in the 19th century, the political and social elites in pre-World War I America still viewed themselves culturally and ethnically as English. This self-labeling was significantly shared by important people: e.g., the Presbyterian southerner Wilson, the New York descendant of Dutchmen, Theodore Roosevelt, and even the New England opponent of the League of Nations John Cabot Lodge, who had backed England fervently during the war.

Although neither Cooper nor Gardner shows interest in the broader cultural context of America's entry into the

war or in the problematic nature of American neutrality, both dwell tendentiously on Wilson's adventurism in Mexico. Cooper, who draws the more sympathetic picture of Wilson, sees him, however, as chastened by his Mexican fiasco and prepared for his grander (more progressive) role in the European struggle. By contrast, Gardner depicts Wilson's feuding with the Mexican dictator Victoriano Huerta as the keystone of his foreign policy. Gardner, a generally pro-Soviet historian of the Cold War, has criticized FDR for being excessively antagonistic to Stalin. In this volume he reduces Wilson's involvement with Europe to a mere sideshow, the main American objective in 1914 being the imperialist subjugation of Latin America. As a student of William Appleman Williams and a product of the Wisconsin School of Revisionism which pioneered "Marxist" interpretations of American diplomacy, Gardner presents Wilson as subservient to business interests. Yet, Gardner does not revive Eugene Debs's older American socialist view of Wilson's European Crusade as an attempt to save J. P. Morgan's loans to England. The Debsian view was at least plausible, but grossly oversimplified. Gardner, on the other hand, appeals entirely to leftist faith, proposing that Wilson sent armies into Europe to reach Latin America through the back door.

While Gardner is on shaky ground in discussing Europe, his treatment of Mexico, as a victim of Wilsonian imperialism, is even more misleading. Wilson dispatched American troops to Veracruz in April 1914 for reasons that Chris Dodd would have appreciated far more than James Burnham. He intended to topple Huerta's right-wing autocracy and to restore the principles of the Mexican Revolution of 1910. The Revolution, which Wilson applauded, outlawed the Catholic Church and expropriated latifundia, supposedly to divide the lands among the peasantry. Wilson had badgered the first revolutionary president Francisco Madero for not pushing agrarian reform hard enough. When Huerta, who allied himself with landowners, overthrew and executed Madero in February 1913, Wilson looked for an excuse to intervene. The occupation of Veracruz, which took place on the pretext of a slight to American honor, caused Huerta to resign; his opponent, who succeeded him with American support, Venustiano Carranza, promised to restore the revolutionary regime. Unfortunately Carranza's rival, the adventurous bandit, Pancho Villa, refused to cooperate and raided border towns in New Mexico. After Villa recklessly massacred 16 American mine engineers, Pershing crossed the border, with several thousand soldiers, to pursue him. Soon the punitive expedition also faced the armies of Carranza, who unexpectedly turned against his American sponsors. The hapless American expeditionary force wandered through Northern Mexico, until a settlement was made several months later to retrieve them.

According to Gardner, Wilson's aggressive behavior in Mexico set the tone for American foreign policy from 1914 on. Gardner is right, though not for the reasons that he gives. A combination of doctrinaire democratic idealism and operational ineptitude has wrought havoc on American foreign policy

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throughout this century. Wilsonianism foreshadowed some of the most disastrous tendencies in modern American statecraft: obsessive anti-imperialism (Gardner's assertions notwithstanding), a superstitious belief in democratic formalism as a new world religion, and self-delusion about the realities of power politics. The Mexican adventure was a symbolic beginning of the recurrent American attempt to put international relations in sync with adolescent idealism. The vulgarized descendents of Wilson are still among us, selectively proclaiming their doctrine of human rights. □

The Liberal Smoke Screen

William E. Leuchtenburg: *In the Shadow of FDR: From Harry Truman to Ronald Reagan;* Cornell University Press; Ithaca, NY.

John Kenneth Galbraith: *The Anatomy of Power;* Houghton Mifflin Company; Boston.

by Ryan J. Barilleaux

When Ronald Reagan assumed the Presidency, he was assailed by liberals for wanting both too much power and too little. Mr. Reagan had made it clear that he intended to restore the United States to the position of strength and world leadership it had formerly occupied, and he also wanted to restore to the Presidency the pre-Carterian dignity of the office. At the same time, the President was determined to reduce the size and scope of the Federal government, and to delegate more responsibility to his subordinates than his recent predecessors had done. Of course, his liberal critics would have none of these changes. They charged Mr. Reagan with wanting both an "imperial" and a "nine-to-five" Presidency. They attacked him for seeking too much power in foreign affairs and not enough domestically. To them, he was trying to usurp power by asking for less of it.

This reaction to President Reagan highlights an interesting feature of contemporary liberalism: its apparent ambivalence toward power. On the one hand, liberals like to believe that power is a poor substitute for goodwill and thus unsavory. At the same time, however, they insist on the use of power, particularly state power, in the services of their objectives. While there appears to be ambivalence in this view, closer examination reveals a clear pattern of preference in the liberal notion of power. Liberals wring their hands over corporate power, but seem unconcerned about the power of labor unions. They celebrate the use of governmental power by the "positive state," but are fearful of growing military power. They want the government to support the anti-American "forces for change" around the world, but not friendly governments trying to maintain order. In short, liberals are not really skittish about power, only nonliberal uses of power.

This pattern can be clearly seen in the liberal view of the Presidency, as the treatment of Mr. Reagan suggests. Franklin Roosevelt is their great Presidential hero, because he used the power of his office and the force of his personality to build the modern welfare state. When Dwight Eisenhower consciously adopted a more reserved presidential style, he was condemned as "the bland leading the bland" by critics aching for a Rooseveltian Presidency. John Kennedy's posturing and rhetoric seemed to satisfy that ache, particularly after his death. The reaction to Lyndon Johnson was mixed: loved for the Great Society, vilified for the war in Vietnam and the invasion of the Dominican Republic. By the time of Richard Nixon, the liberal cohort was condemning the "imperial Presidency" and calling for executive restraint. Yet Nixon's use of presidential power was not unlike Roosevelt's or Kennedy's—his political goals were simply different. Liberals welcomed Jimmy Carter's populist Presidency, then abandoned it as passionless and weak. Moreover, instead of stridently advancing liberal causes, Carter became inordinately concerned with inflation and government spending. When Ronald Reagan assumed office, he was accused of trying to revive the imperial Presidency for reasons ranging from his belief in the dignity of the office to his wife's desire for new china for the White House. What Jack and Jackie had done was Camelot, but what the Reagans wanted was Caesarism.

Liberals accept only those uses of power which serve their ends, and castigate all others as dangerous. Presidents who seek to implement nonliberal goals are not merely misguided, but imperialistic abusers of power and the Presidential office. The corollary to this view is the insistence that Presidents be judged according to standards associated with liberal heroes, such as Roosevelt and Kennedy. Both Democrats and Republicans have suffered under these comparisons: no living President, particularly a conservative one, can compare with the idealized memories of FDR and JFK. Moreover, nonliberals are unqualified as models for comparison. Consequentially, the recent efforts to reinterpret Eisenhower's Presidency have been regarded as controversial among academicians and media pundits. Revisionist interpretations of Eisenhower (i.e., those which challenge the liberals' view of him as somnolent) are dismissed as wrong or accepted only with qualifications. The usual line is that Ike may have been a good manager, but he lacked Roosevelt's vision or Kennedy's vigor—never mind

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the balanced budgets. Similarly, Mr. Reagan's successful handling of the Presidency is dismissed as unworthy of emulation, and he is said to be out of touch with reality. His successful leadership of public opinion is explained away as mere theatrics. No matter what he, Eisenhower, or any other nonliberal may accomplish, they lack the necessary political orientation to earn them their due credit.

William Leuchtenburg's *In the Shadow of FDR* stands as a monument to this view. His thesis is that every President since Truman has had to live down comparison to Roosevelt, and that living in FDR's long shadow has affected the behavior of these Presidents. Yet Leuchtenburg only chronicles the modulations in liberal judgments of Presidents and the Presidency since 1945. Indeed, his unstated operational definition of the Roosevelt legacy is liberal opinion, particularly that of old New Dealers. Little is recorded of public opinion or of the opinions of anyone not among Roosevelt's most devoted followers. The shadow of FDR, then, is but a wraith of the Brain Trust. Indeed, the figure who looms largest in this book is not FDR, but Eleanor Roosevelt. Leuchtenburg faithfully records her interactions with and opinions of Truman, Kennedy, and Johnson, as if her views were the most important in the nation. She dominates this work, and other liberal views of the post-Roosevelt presidency are cast in relation to hers. This is because her views were most important to Leuchtenburg and his ilk.

The consequence of this particular conception of the Roosevelt legacy is that most of the Presidents Leuchtenburg surveys are unaffected by the supposed shadow of FDR; only Truman, Kennedy, and Johnson really felt any burden of the Roosevelt legacy, and the effect on Kennedy and Johnson was marginal. As for the others, Leuchtenburg must overwork weak links between Roosevelt and them to make his case. He makes much of Eisenhower's "owing" his Presidency to FDR, because Roosevelt had promoted Ike rapidly during World War II. The chapter on Nixon and Ford is an exercise in obfuscation, one that merely shows that the two opposed FDR's policies. Carter initially sought to identify himself with the memory of Roosevelt, but soon found it of little value. Finally, because he cannot bear Mr. Reagan's outright repudiation of the Roosevelt legacy, Leuchtenburg devotes an enormous amount of space to demonstrating that Mr. Reagan was, in his youth, a liberal Democrat.

Leuchtenburg not only thinks that Presidents have been judged according to the memory of FDR, but that they *ought* to be:

> Yet it has also been, and continues to be, beneficial to use Roosevelt's performance as a measuring rod, for his largeness of view has been, and is, badly needed. FDR displayed a hospitality to new ideas and vivid personalities that sets a standard for all who follow him. He demonstrated, as well, a willingness to concern himself about excluded groups in America

that has been too little seen in recent years. In short, he showed that government can be both imaginative and humane, a contribution that is as relevant to our own times as it was to his.

The shadow of FDR, then, falls across the minds of Leuchtenburg and other liberals rather than across the Presidency. The relevance of this legacy to Chief Executives, however, lies in the liberals' dominance of commentary and the academe. They continue to hound the Presidents with idealized reminiscences of the Roosevelt era. Moreover, they have added Kennedy to their presidential pantheon, as the JFK hagiography marking the 20th anniversary of his assassination illustrates. They have defined the Presidency in their own terms, as the great engine of liberalism.

The Anatomy of Power, ostensibly intended as a primer on the fundamental elements of power, is essentially an effort to provide a philosophical justification for the liberal concept of power. Professor Galbraith begins by analyzing the instruments and sources of power in a rather abstract fashion, but quickly reveals the essential message of his work. He develops a typology of power instruments—condign, compensatory, and conditioned—and traces the sources of power in personality, property, and organization. It soon becomes apparent that this groundwork is only prefatory to Galbraith's main argument, as he reveals in the examples he employs to develop and illustrate his points: power is held by men over women, corporations over their employees and the economy, and the elite over the masses. The message is clear: power is mostly held by the nonliberal segments of society. Others have little power.

Then come the concrete examples, all of which are supposed to convince the reader of the power of corporations and the military establishment, and of the relative weakness of the bulk of society and the nonmilitary state in the face of these forces.

> The modern military establishment strongly concentrates power. It exacts a high level of submission from

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a large number of individuals within the organization, and in symmetrical fashion it exacts an equivalent obedience outside. The modern corporation expects and receives a high level of conformity from the many in its management. And its property resources accord it an extensive command over the many it employs. From this flows an extensive submission by the citizenry and the state. As in the case of the military, the purposes of the great business enterprise, the ideas that sustain it are largely, though not quite completely, above debate.

The point of Galbraith's argument is clear: military and corporate power must be undercut, and the power of those elements in society opposed to them must be enhanced. This means limits on corporations, more power for unions and consumer groups, a shift of government resources from military to nonmilitary programs, and an overall growth in state power. In short, Galbraith uses the concept of power to develop a philosophical brief for the liberal agenda, one that shares the same sorts of biases, presuppositions, and interpretations as Leuchtenburg's treatise. Galbraith provides the rationale for employing the Presidency as the engine of liberalism: the sources of power opposed to corporate and military power must be concentrated, and it is through state action that such concentration should occur. As Roosevelt's tenure demonstrates, the Presidency is a wonderful vehicle for accomplishing this growth in state power and the implementation of the liberal agenda. That is why all Presidents must be

Notables

Of Socialism and Sentimentality

"Socialism," wrote Dostoevsky in *The Possessed,* "spreads among us chiefly because of sentimentality." He was, of course, writing about upper-middle-class, 19th-century Russian society, but a reading of *Troubled Journey: From Pearl Harbor to Ronald Reagan* (Hill and Wang; New York) by Frederick Siegel suggests that the rise of the American New Left during the 1960's was also made possible by the spread of rootless sentimentality during the 50's. Among conservatives, the 50's are often uncritically lauded as a time of social stability when leftism was vigorously opposed both at home and abroad. But, however bravely the Marines may have fought at Inchon, and however zealously the House Un-American Activities Committee may have pressed its case in Hollywood, middle America in the 50's was in the process of surrendering its religious convictions, the most important stay against the sentimentality that precedes leftist innovation.

Though long deeply divided over questions of religious doctrine, Americans have for most of their history been firmly united in pondering such questions with unsentimental moral seriousness. In the 1950's, Dr. Siegel shows, that changed, as doctrinal religion melted into "a syrupy religion of good feelings" in which the pursuit of personal and familial happiness was guided by an outlook "relaxed, unadventurous, comfortably satisfied with . . . life and blandly optimistic about the future." Failing to perceive the absence of religious rigor signaled by this complacence, John F. Kennedy, who "wore his religion lightly," offered an entertainment-seeking nation the enthusiasm of his own elitist sentimen-

talism. A vibrant government of heroes and technocrats, a "guerrilla administration" of "the best and the brightest," would move America out of the doldrums with high-sounding rhetoric, technical expertise, and a few Green Berets. Fed by the spectacle of Camelot, national sentimentalism was even more pronounced, widespread, and insatiable at Kennedy's death. When the gallantry of the Green Berets did not secure the quick and impressive victory in Vietnam of which Kennedy was confident, then the elitism, theatricality, and activism which he had employed in initiating it became the trademarks of the upper-middle-class counterculture who opposed it. Hence, it was JFK, Siegel argues, who had set the tone for "radical chic."

Meanwhile, true to Dostoevsky's maxim, LBJ rode the tide of liberal sentimentalism toward socialism with the Great Society programs that massively expanded America's welfare-state apparatus. "The idea of the Great Society," Siegel notes, " . . . was a substitute for the older set of political and moral ideals which had been displaced" during the 50's and early 60's. The momentousness of this shift is perceptively explained by Siegel: "The private virtues essential for the public life of a democracy, now eroded, were to be supplied by the state, an extraordinary departure in American political thought. (Shortly the New Left would mimic the moral claims of the Great Society by offering itself as a replacement for those same lost virtues.)"

Though Siegel's own fondness for secular left-liberalism weakens his argument at key points, his study well illuminates how sentimental religious laxity among the many has produced frenetic activism in and out of government among the few. □

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judged in reference to the Roosevelt-Kennedy legacy: only this model of Presidential leadership properly addresses the need for concentrating power in the "positive state." For the liberals, then, the Presidency is only legitimate when its occupant seeks to carry out the programs and purposes of liberalism. Otherwise, it is a danger to the Republic. This view is the real shadow of FDR. As long as it continues to influence assessments of Presidents and the Presidency, this view will cast a pall over the nation. □

Liking Ike

Stephen E. Ambrose: *Eisenhower, Volume One: Soldier, General of the Army, President-Elect, 1890-1952;* Simon & Schuster; New York.

by John C. Caiazza

Great athletes, it is said, all are so good that they make their feats look easy. The same was true of Dwight David Eisenhower, first as a career soldier, then as Supreme Allied Commander, and finally as politician and President. Stephen Ambrose traces Eisenhower's career from his birth up to election night November 1952, when Eisenhower was elected. He details Eisenhower's early years in Abilene, Kansas, the period at West Point, and his years during World War II as aide to George Marshall and as Overlord's Supreme Commander. The 20-odd years between West Point and the onset of World War II are of particular interest, for it was during this period that Eisenhower learned his trade as a soldier and officer in the United States Army.

Eisenhower was a staff officer rather than a regimental leader. His skills were those of organization, detail, supply, personnel, logistics, and accommodating the views of senior commanders, just the qualities that were required to organize American, British, French, and Canadian air, sea, and land forces in their combined assault on Hitler's *Festung Europa.* Eisenhower is often faulted for a lack of military leadership in the precise sense of being able to wield armies on the field, matching the opponent's moves, and bringing in a victory of arms. Ambrose attempts to prove that Eisenhower was just this sort of commander since he led armies in Africa, Italy, and Western Europe, but in truth Eisenhower was no MacArthur, not known for his field generalship. In a sense, however, Eisenhower's generalship was superior to that of MacArthur, Montgomery, Rommel, or even Napoleon and Caesar. His historic success was one that was only possible in the middle of the 20th century, when technology provided the ability to organize, train, supply, and move millions of men and women and their separate efforts into one objective. Eisenhower did not accomplish the destruction of Hitler's empire by personally leading armies, but by directing others (including Montgomery, Patton, and Bradley) to do so and by coordinating overall strategy. Eisenhower's success lay in his abilities to keep thousands of tons of supplies moving each day, to keep Patton and Montgomery from each other's throats, to deal patiently with Churchill, de Gaulle, and Roosevelt, to project a sense of confidence, and to deal with the press. His were the skills of a bureaucrat. Yet it was precisely such skills that were needed to lead the combined attack on Hitler.

How good was Eisenhower at what he did? He was a general and commander of the largest invasion force ever assembled who successfully prosecuted the end of the European war and the destruction of the nazi army. He was the last two-term President of the U.S., and the third man in American history to be both General of the Army and President, after Washington and Grant. Yet the initial question remains, for despite all of his accomplishments, there is this image of Eisenhower as a likable buffoon, stumbling over his platitudes, not quite up to the technical dimensions of his job, either as Commander or as President.

When John Kennedy sought the Presidency in 1960, he ran on the premise that nothing had happened during Eisenhower's terms and that it was time to "get this country moving again." Twenty years later, after race riots, stagflation, Watergate, Vietnam, cultural revolution at home and Soviet expansion abroad, that "nothing happened" sounds awfully good. Eisenhower's two terms in office now seem like a golden age, for we may wonder if the nation will ever again enjoy the same degree of confidence, peace, and international supremacy that it did from 1952 to 1960. This contrast between the pleasant 50's and the awful 80's has recently led historians and social critics to a re-examination of the man himself; Ambrose's volume is a part of this activity. Isn't there, they ask, some causal nexus between the kind of man Eisenhower was and the kind of times the 50's were?

Understanding organized sports is

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CONFLUENCES

From Boring to Bootless

One of the best things about most of America's past Presidential elections is that they have really decided so little. A remarkably centrist cultural and social consensus has dictated that, despite all of the vehement campaign rhetoric, both major parties have usually agreed on a wide range of fundamental issues. This national consensus has often made for dull elections, as Paul Boller, Jr. admits in *Presidential Campaigns* (Oxford University Press; New York), a collection of rather superficial capsule histories of Presidential elections, enlivened by the inclusion of many campaign anecdotes. But dull yet free elections are greatly desirable, since they signal national harmony. Radical disharmony makes elections less dull, but far more ominous.

But 12 years ago, a coalition of extremist factions turned George McGovern's campaign into an assault upon middle America. Voters overwhelmingly voiced their disapproval. But rather than accepting this verdict, radicals simply moved key social issues beyond the reach of the ballot and into activist courts, tendentious bureaucracies, and the irresponsible media. Ironically, many of those who loudly blamed Reagan's election in 1980 on insufficient voter participation were the very people making voting seem like a waste of time to many thoughtful citizens. Certainly, one suspects that many who once supported Reagan because of their commitment to traditional values will not bother this year after watching his largely ineffectual struggle against unelected judges, bureaucrats, and newsmen on such issues as abortion, tax-subsidized contraceptives, and school reform. This effective disenfranchisement of Americans, not voter apathy, is perhaps the most troubling recent development in national politics. □

useful for trying to understand Eisenhower. He was, he always said of himself, a team player (his favorite sport, incidentally, was football). The subordination of self to a common goal, the coordination of one's personal efforts to what the team demands are necessary in football, but even more so in a bureaucracy. Eisenhower's success as a military officer was due to the fact that he was a team player in the Army of bureaucracy.

Eisenhower had an ego and wanted to shine no less, perhaps, than Douglas MacArthur, but how can that be accomplished when one is a member of a bureaucracy? This was Eisenhower's problem. One way to shine was through knowledge; Eisenhower enjoyed the tutelage of a remarkable officer named Fox Connor under whom he served in Panama. Connor's insistence that Eisenhower study military history and replay old campaigns paid off, for when he entered the Army's Command and General Staff School, Eisenhower, known chiefly for his friendliness and enthusiasm for sports, came in at the top of the class. There comes a time to get serious about your career, he once said.

Another way to succeed as a bureaucrat is through conformity, which in the Army means following your commander's orders. For Eisenhower, as a second-in-command for a succession of brilliant officers—Connor, MacArthur, and Marshall—it meant knowing your commander's mind-set so well that you could anticipate his orders, and act as an extension of the commander. Expressing one's opinion, except in private, was one thing Eisenhower learned not to do. When he wrote an article for an Army journal advocating tank warfare, his superiors told him that it was contrary to Army doctrine (Rommell, Patton, and de Gaulle, however, were saying the same things as Eisenhower). Eisenhower never raised the issue again.

The biggest problem in any bureaucracy is getting other people to do things for you. This requires a means of persuasion, for which Eisenhower used his tremendous personality. His friendliness and magnetism projected very well, which helped him with his superiors, subordinates, and peers, and he became a master at compromise and accommodation between strong egos and competing interests. One of the chief skills of the successful bureaucrat is never to make enemies. Richard Nixon relates how Eisenhower once called him up to give him specific instructions to savage Adlai Stevenson in response to a Stevensonian attack on Eisenhower's Administration. The net political effect, as both men knew, was that Nixon would reinforce his public image as a street fighter while Eisenhower would reinforce his as "Mr. Clean." Eisenhower rewarded Nixon by publicly stating that Nixon was well qualified to be President. One does not learn such skills on Inauguration Day. Eisenhower learned them in the Army.

Unlike John Kennedy, Eisenhower hid talents that no one suspected he had. The usual disparity between public image and private reality found in public figures applies to Eisenhower—but in his case, it works to Eisenhower's advantage. Thus it is that a generation after their respective presidencies, Kennedy's reputation has declined, while Eisenhower's has increased.

Besides the talents of a successful bureaucrat, something else lay hidden at the heart of Eisenhower's success. In one sense, the popular conviction distilled into a descriptive phrase was precise and intuitively correct. The phrase "Eisenhower morality" is usually used pejoratively by cultural relativists who wish to condemn traditional morality. But "Eisenhower morality" also explains his strength, namely that he was a moral man, a man of virtue, virtue conceived here as a strength of character, not as a code of ethics held to out of fear or conformity. And Eisenhower's successes were a result of his virtue. If the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton, then the battle for Europe was won on thousands of athletic fields in the high schools and colleges of America. □

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COMMENDABLES

Of Devotion and Democracy

Richard John Neuhaus: *The Naked Public Square: Religion and Democracy;* William B. Eerdmans; Grand Rapids, MI.

The worst thing about the wonderful but secondary and nonsalvific blessings of Christianity is that once those who enjoy the divine bestowals have forgotten their source, these blessings are set up as objects of new and destructive forms of worship. The Scientific Revolution, for instance, could never have occurred without the Christian understanding of an ordered, beneficent creation performed by a transcendent Deity. Yet during the last century and a half naturalistic scient*ism* has been one of the strongest foes of the faith that made science possible. Similarly, modern liberal democracy would have been impossible without the scriptural concepts of the sacred worth of the individual and the strict impartiality of divine justice. But in recent decades some political leaders and commentators have attacked religion, especially public religion, as incompatible with the kind of democracy to which it gave birth. In disingenuous and finally futile response to atheistic scientists or secularist democrats, some try to defend scriptural faith by making it look like the child, not the parent, of science and democracy: this way lies both "scientific creationism" and "liberation theology." True friends of theocentric faith, as well as science and democracy, must frankly admit that religion is larger than and, in significant ways, different from, its terrestrial progeny. It is not essentially scientific, nor is it at heart democratic. As Hans Kindt, a Latter-day-Saint preacher, once put it: "God is not some celestial politician seeking your vote. God is to be found, and God is to be obeyed."

God's stubborn refusal to stand for office every four years, or to submit the Ten Commandments or Sermon on the Mount to popular referendum, has made Him a prime target for radical egalitarians bent upon making America "more democratic." *The Naked Public Square,* written by leading Lutheran pastor Richard John Neuhaus, director of The Rockford Institute's Center on Religion & Society in New York, offers a cogent demonstration, however, that without public acknowledgment of the unelected King of kings, America's liberal democracy could not have been born and cannot now survive. In prose that combines rigor and wit, Pastor Neuhaus argues that the moral legitimacy of democratic government is evident only beneath the "sacred canopy" of supradmocratic religious beliefs. In the absence of such a canopy, the strictly secular, "naked" public square speedily becomes a battlefield in the "civil war" of unprincipled interest groups. In these profane circumstances, democracy does not seem worth defending, and consequently power-hungry revolutionaries find it easy to turn the state itself into the new church and themselves into the totalitarian new gods.

Pastor Neuhaus is heartened to find "a deep and widespread uneasiness" about America's increasingly naked public square among millions of "incorrigibly religious" Americans. But he is not optimistic as he scans the contemporary scene for a credible religious leadership for these millions. Whereas formerly the main-line Protestant denominations provided such leadership, they have now lost their sense of the "miraculous and transcendent" and become merely "a haven for refugees from radicalisms past." The assertive religious right, in Neuhaus's view, is too individualistic in its theology and too undemocratic and unsophisticated in its cultural orientation to show the way for the country. His hope, hardly an ebullient one, is that somehow an ecumenical union of Lutherans and Catholics can fill the leadership void.

Of course, many American Christians skeptical of ecumenicalism (or Catholicism or Lutheranism) will find reasons for finding fault with Pastor Neuhaus's ecclesiology and his plans for shoring up the American democracy. Given the unprecedented incidence of adultery, divorce, child abuse, pornography, and abortion, many may further wonder if it is not naive to suppose middle America to be as religious as it has ever been. But even if the new "Church militant" called for by Pastor Neuhaus requires different generals and more active recruitment of privates than he envisions, his study makes clear that only the public emergence of such an army can prevent antidemocratic and irreligious troops from seizing power. (BC) □

An upcoming issue of* Chronicles of Culture *will feature an extended treatment of Pastor Neuhaus's book.

Of Bullets & Ballots

Morris Janowitz: *The Reconstruction of Patriotism: Education for Civic Consciousness;* University of Chicago Press; Chicago.

In some ways nothing seems more un-American than military life. The hierarchic authority, the strict discipline, the regimentation of appearance and manner all appear antithetical to the modern American notion of individual rights. However, in *The Reconstruction of Patriotism* Morris Janowitz reminds us that democracy, including American democracy, requires not only a sense of citizen rights, but also a commitment to citizen *obligations.* For inculcating such a commitment, military service is well suited. Indeed, Professor Janowitz shows that the American democracy would probably have been impossible had not the colonists effected "a break with the format of monarchical armies in Europe" during the Revolution by developing the new concept of "the citizen soldier." Moreover, until the end of World War II the armed forces continued to function as a powerful institution of "civic education," serving both to "incorporate the citizen soldier into the larger society" and to imbue him with a feeling of patriotic duty.

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Since 1945, though, the ideal of the citizen soldier has largely eroded, and with it the "ideology of obligatory service." This erosion would be perilous enough if its only victim were the army, already having difficulties in the all-volunteer era and faced with the prospect of declining cohorts. But, Professor Janowitz argues, with military service no longer providing any counterweight to "the current emphasis on rights as against obligations," the very idea of democratic citizenship is in doubt. The disappearance of the citizen soldier is especially troubling, at a time when the public schools are no longer adequately performing their traditional function of teaching civic responsibility. In many instances, in fact, public school teachers even encourage an antipatriotic "oppositionist" stance among their pupils. For these reasons, *The Reconstruction of Patriotism* proposes a new program of compulsory national service, either in the military or in CCC-type work, as a means of making young Americans "more aware of their obligations as citizens." This proposal deserves serious consideration. Boot camp may well be the only place that can teach many of today's young people some of the sterner lessons in civics. □

In Focus

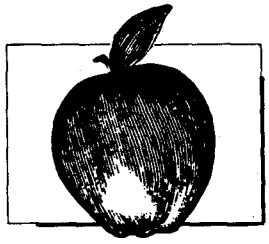
Literary Surveying

Ronald Blythe: *Characters and Their Landscapes;* Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; San Diego.

Central though it is to any sound system of economics, the traditional notion of private property is wholly inadequate in the world of literature. As Henry David Thoreau once observed:

> I have frequently seen a poet withdraw, having enjoyed the most valuable part of a farm, while the crusty farmer supposed that he had got a few wild apples only. Why, the owner does not know it for many years when a poet has put his farm in rhyme, the most admirable kind of invisible fence, has fairly impounded it, milked it, skimmed it, and got all the cream, and left the farmer only the skimmed milk.

Certainly as a radical individualist at war with all traditional sense of community, Thoreau helped make American life, on the farm and in the city, less stable and less meaningful. Nonetheless, he shared with John Clare, Thomas Hardy, Leo Tolstoy, William Hazlitt, and other gifted writers examined in *Characters and Their Landscape* the power to lay imaginative claim to a locale. Emerson may have held legal title to Walden Pond, but Thoreau made the pond and its environs more truly *his* through his imaginative writing than he ever could have through a mere deed of sale. It is, as Ronald Blythe shows in these collected essays, through "the deep blood experience of a place" that a creative writer makes a region uniquely his own. Thus, for instance, John Clare truly "possessed" the village of Helpston more completely than any landholding aristocrat ever could, just as Thomas Hardy held a vaster domain in rural Wessex than did the wealthiest country squire.



Unfortunately, among the well-intentioned Americans now working to protect posterity from the destructive consequences of all the countercultural demi-Thoreaus, frenetically pounding on their different drums, few pay much attention to the literature by which real "ownership" of American geography is passed from generation to generation. Rather like Thoreau's "crusty farmer," most concern themselves with counting the country's economic, political, and legal apples (usually sour). More careful attention to the "invisible fences" that only poets can erect around farms and homes would surely make the threat of visible barbed wire and barricades less ominous. (BC) □

Courting Catastrophe

Scott Donaldson: *Fool for Love, F. Scott Fitzgerald;* Congdon & Weed; New York.

Love, popular culture endlessly reminds us, makes the world go round. But since the cultural sphere now seems to be wobbling erratically in its orbit, a sensible observer might suspect that something is amiss in this rotary force. As citations in the *Oxford English Dictionary* well illustrate, *love* was formerly more truly "a many splendored thing" than it is today. For centuries, the word often signified the freely avowed loyalty of man to man, with no hint of homosexual perversion: a true knight loved his king and countrymen as fully as he loved his lady. Formerly, *love* also frequently denoted the beneficent regard of God for His creatures, and of the devout for their Deity. Nowadays, *love* has in common usage shriveled into one meaning—erotic attachment between two people (usually, but not always, of the opposite sex). Left behind is the word's moral and religious heritage.

Though this semantic narrowing has been long developing, it accelerated dramatically during the 1920's, with harmful consequences well illustrated in the life and art of the Jazz Age's most gifted chronicler, F. Scott Fitzgerald. As Scott Donaldson shows in *Fool for Love,* Fitzgerald, at the same time celebrated, feared, and fell victim to the "revolution in morals" during the 1920's. Leaving behind the love of God found in Catholicism, Fitzgerald sought to make romanticized sexual love the basis for his new credo in life and art. "I am always searching for the perfect love," he told Laura Guthrie. In literature this quest elevated the "golden girl over whom hung an aura of money, beauty, and social position" to a quasi-divine status for such hopelessly idealistic protagonists as Jay Gatsby. In life this meant first a disastrous marriage to the untamable Zelda Sayre, and then (with an insane Zelda institutionalized) a string of adulterous affairs about which Fitzgerald felt acutely guilty, but which he felt compelled to continue. "Fitzgerald," observes Donaldson, "needed the love of women, and the acceptance and approval that came with it." However, as his alcoholism, his emotional instability, and his perpetual belligerence suggest, he needed something more as

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well. He needed the consolations accessible only through an older, less romantic but more moral and religious love. Such consolations he never found. In such late works as *Tender is the Night,* Fitzgerald evinced a growing awareness that the single-minded pursuit of romantic love was inexorably destructive. But in life he found little but despair to replace that pursuit. Professor Donaldson strains to make a sober last year and an uneven, uncompleted last novel show that Fitzgerald had come to understand that his salvation lay in doing his work as a writer. But a man who could write, two months before his death, that "life is essentially a cheat and its conditions are those of defeat" is one, like the protagonist of *Tender is the Night,* who had never found the "perfect love" among women and had been destroyed in the search. (BC) □

The Public Climate

Jim Harrison: *Sundog;* E. P. Dutton/Seymour Lawrence; New York.

There are actually two Michigans. They are unimaginatively known as the "Lower" and "Upper" peninsulas. The latter is often designated the "U.P." In states that have a single major metropolis, there's usually that city and what's left: e.g., Chicago and the Rest. In Michigan, it's Detroit and the Rest. However, the geopolitical arrangement of the state, with one portion of the land mass connected to the other by a narrow band of man-hoisted structural steel and concrete (7400 feet long), causes still another division. Every now and then there's a movement afoot to have the U.P. break away from the state of Michigan and so become the

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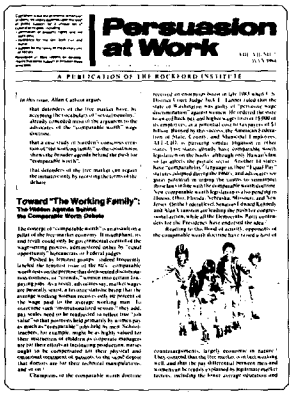
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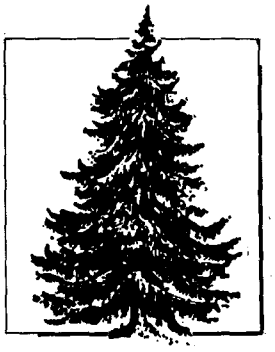
state of Superior. While that title has something to do with the lake of the same name, it undoubtedly carries with it the notion of being better. Anyone who has spent a day in Detroit will, upon arrival in the north, know in about 0.1 seconds that there is a physical superiority abounding there.

However, this is not to give in to the claim that "Superior" is better. One must admit, though, that it is different. Life has a greater intensity in the U.P., perhaps because there is little there to distract from the process of day-to-day living. What's more, Nature is severe and so more obvious: fall and winter are characterized by not mere inches of snow and below-freezing temperatures, but feet of snow and sub-zero readings. People we have known who attended one of the few institutions of higher learning in the upper peninsula underwent some major or minor torquing. Some of these people became *very* serious engineers; others chased unicorns after consuming large quantities of liquor.

Ernest Hemingway did the lower peninsula of Michigan. Jim Harrison does the upper. This comparison is forced by geography and occupation; it does not mean that Hemingway and Harrison are equals in a thoroughgoing sense, though it is fair to say that both are serious



writers who concentrate on man in a natural environment that is now surrounded by a man-made world. *Sundog* addresses some fundamental problems of living in what amounts to a fairly fundamental manner. Harrison seems to opt for action over intellect, yet he is trapped by his own intellectualizing. A consequence is that *Sundog* becomes as studiously mannered as a four-wheel-drive (made in Detroit) complete with radial tires and a CB antenna, photographed in a stand of virgin pines. □

Dead Soul

John M. Allegro: *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Christian Myth;* Prometheus; Buffalo, NY.

John M. Allegro has distinguished himself as an editor and commentator of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Unfortunately, his erudition did not prevent him from writing a very foolish book. Allegro believes that the resemblance between the Scrolls and certain Christian practices and doctrines constitutes nothing less than a demonstration that Christianity, like any religion, is a myth shaped by historical forces and mystic imagination.

His curious process of reasoning is worth studying, at least by literary pathologists. By a tendentious process of historical conjecture, the Teacher of Righteousness (the leader of that strange Jewish sect known as the Essenes) is identified with Jesus of Nazareth—not, of course, historically but symbolically. This reconstruction requires us to accept a number of conjectures and hypotheses, none of which is at all certain: that the priest-king Alexander Jannaeus attacked the Essene community at Qumran; that references to crucifixion (hanging on trees) include the Teacher of Righteousness; that a reference to "a certain exalted man who spread his hands on the many-fruited tree . . . who one day caused the sun to stand still" means that the crucified (conjecturally) Teacher was identified with Joshua = Jesus.

To make the historical connection between the Essenes and the early Christians, Allegro constructs an historical novel about scattered sectarians fleeing the Army of the Roman Emperor Vespasian. Frustrated in their hopes of establishing a kingdom on earth, they turn to other-worldly contemplation and are eventually absorbed into the varied streams of mythological speculation that goes by the name of the Christian Church. Eventually they, along with many others, are stigmatized as gnostic heretics by the narrow-minded early Fathers: "Irenaeus led the way in making one cycle of these myths, relating to the activities of a latter day Joshua/Jesus and his fishermen disciples, a canon of authority . . . . This massive depletion in the faith's store of tales had . . . most unfortunate consequences."

Suppose for a moment the impossible: that all of Allegro's strictly historical conjectures are correct. What of it? It shows a very imperfect understanding of Christian orthodoxy to suppose that one more mythological parallel to the crucifixion or one more set of historical influences on the early Church would make the slightest difference. It had always been supposed that pagan religions were suffused with a glimmer of the truth, at least since the time of St. Paul who declared to the Athenians that their unknown god was God. How much more likely that a mystical sect of Judaism, steeped in the scriptures of the Old Testament, should prefigure the revelation. As for direct influence of the Essenes, it is no more likely than that of the Pharisees who did, after all, believe in an afterlife. On the other hand, there should be nothing surprising in the discovery that the social practices and religious doctrines of early Jewish Christians should have much in common with those of Jewish Essenes. Societies maintain continuity. American followers of the Korean "prophet," the Rev. Moon, still use the language of Christianity and probably sneak off for a Big Mac, whenever they get a chance.

Allegro, like many religion scholars today, refuses to confront the inconvenient but massive evidence for the historicity of the Gospels and the *Acts of the Apostles,* works that are regularly mined by historians for their accurate and valuable testimony on life in the eastern end of the Roman world. It is as if all those years of reading the Essene documents had softened his brain. Christian believers have little to fear from a work whose twisted reasoning and dissociative interpretations are as bizarre as the Essene commentaries themselves. □

Perceptibles

Zbigniew Lewicki: *The Bang and the Whimper: Apocalypse and Entropy in American Literature;* Greenwood Press; Westport, CT.

Every instant, each of us moves closer to the End. It may be a result of "the big one," or it could simply be that our biological software program has run its functions. Every instant there is more disorder. In such a universe of dissolutions, what is the role of the artist? To create something that will last beyond the time of its creator and

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beyond the times or to cut a slice of chaos? Professor Lewicki shows that American writers—from John Cotton to John Updike—have been grappling with this problem. It begins to appear that Moderns have progressed far beyond the Ancients: into the Realm of Disorder. □

* * *

Herbert Kohl: *Growing Minds: On Becoming a Teacher;* Harper & Row; New York.

The author of *The Open Classroom* offers some progressive advice on the craft of teaching. Much of his argument is cast in the form of a personal memoir. To parents of school-age children, the history of Kohl's teaching career will read more like a catalog of errors or a gangster's rap sheet. His own classrooms sound like group therapy sessions. His free-wheeling approach is justified by this bit of sentimental philosophizing:

> Every class of children is unique and therefore curriculum must be shaped and formed to meet the needs and styles of each new class.

In an innocuous sense, this declaration is a familiar platitude, but if he is serious, it is all too easy to see how sensitive and caring teachers like Kohl helped to demolish our system of public schools. What is the point to education, if each of us learns only the bits and fragments of information which suit our "style"? No wonder we deplore the loss of small talk in the U.S.—we have no common ground for conversation. There is another side to this business of child-centered schooling. What happens to the whole idea of standards—that dreaded and coercive word—when every teacher in every classroom can feel free to rewrite the course to suit his

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students? Especially when, like Kohl, they "don't have the heart to punish children"?

Kohl is smart enough to realize that there is more to learning than style and approach, that content plays some part in the learning process. Unfortunately, there is no sign that Kohl ever took the trouble to acquire a store of learning or that he has the slightest idea of what might constitute an educated person. If you are not interested in the content of education, why become a teacher in the first place? After all, he points out, teachers are ill-paid and underappreciated. His response to this defeatism: "The prime reason to teach is wanting to be with young people and help them grow." No wonder we're in trouble. Kohl and his disciples are drawing good salaries (underpaid, indeed. Eight months of destroying young minds—what is it worth?) because they enjoy hanging around with children. *Growing Minds* goes a long way to persuade us that education is too important to be left to the teachers. (TJF) □

* * *

Malcolm Bradbury: *The Modern American Novel;* Oxford University Press; New York.

Serviceable handbooks to literature are always handy to have around the house or office; those that are pithy rather than prolix are even superior. Malcolm Bradbury, himself no mean novelist, examines, in a mere 186 pages (excluding back-of-the-book materials), American fiction from the 1890's on to our day. Works are not only placed in their social context, but also in relation to the other creations produced during their immediate time frame. Bradbury's final sentence is worth quoting in full, for, coming as it does from a British writer, it indicates that a dream of our forefathers, that American literature be respected on the world scene, has been fulfilled:

> If the novel is, at best, a deep apprehension of what it means, in a changing world, to utter ourselves, structure our experience, name our world into being, then over the course of the century the best American fiction has become a literature of primary enquiries into the means of doing exactly that. □

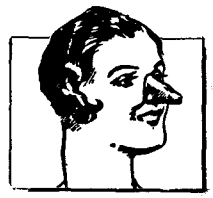
Waste of Money

Canonized for Confusion

Red Emma Speaks: An Emma Goldman Reader; Edited by Alix Kates Shulman; Schocken Books; New York.

In science fields, creating a false paradigm is a sure way to gain disrepute among posterity. The modern reputations, for instance, of Ptolemy as an astronomer, or of Tycho Brahe as a cosmologist are not high. In politics, however, the authors of spurious theories may be favorably remembered not only despite their errors, but even *because* of them. The apotheosis of Karl Marx is a case in point: Marx is widely revered for making historical predictions that have almost all failed. A similar paradox exists in the case of Emma Goldman, radical exponent of anarchy and "free communism" from the 1890's to the 1930's. Indefatigably, Miss Goldman prophesied that a wonderful new society was about to emerge in which the evils of government, family, religion, and traditional morality would all be replaced by "nature's forces," "free motherhood," and "spontaneity and free opportunity." The glorious result would be "individual liberty and economic equality" and a universal new sense of the "joy of life."

Yet even before Miss Goldman's death in 1940, her predictions were being contradicted on every hand. Her early conviction that the blissful revolution she sought was unfolding in communist Russia was cruelly smashed during the two years she spent there after her deportation from America. To her dismay she discovered that the



Russian anarchists had been, predictably, insufficiently "organized" (i.e., *governed*) to oppose the statist ambitions of the Bolsheviks, and that Marxism had turned the country into a dystopia of oppression, new class distinctions, and brutal coercion. Similarly, during the Spanish Civil War her naive confidence in the triumph of anarchism failed to take into account the hard realities of human corruption and international politics. As a young woman, Miss Goldman was confident that anarchism was about to "usher in the Dawn." But the anarchist sun so stubbornly stayed below the historical horizon that a few years before her death, she had to admit that anarchism was "to a certain extent in abeyance," even as she reaffirmed her faith that at some unspecified future time it would yet "be vindicated."

The "free love," the rebellion against authority, and the egotistic indulgence of the 1960's did indeed make it appear for a time that anarchy was about to have its day. But Miss Goldman's notion that unbounded licentiousness would produce a utopia seemed ludicrous to sensible observers who witnessed the chaos, despair, and social disintegration of that tumultuous decade. Still, Schocken Books would not be reissuing an expanded anthology of Miss Goldman's vaticinations if their market experts did not know that the Left, which is immune to facts, will praise and promote her outmoded ideological fatuities. Radical feminists like Alix Shulman are so enamored of Miss Goldman's attacks on the family that they will eagerly embrace any philosophical absurdity so long as it is hostile to the family. If it is ever established that Ptolemy was a closet communist or a proto-feminist, somebody will put together a sympathetic reconsideration of his theory of epicycles. (BC) □

Liberal Neuroses

John S. Saloma III: *Ominous Politics: The New Conservative Labyrinth;* Hill and Wang; New York.

Because Goliath laughed when David came against him with a slingshot and five smooth stones, we may safely assume that the giant was neither a leftist nor a liberal. For as *Ominous Politics* by John S. Saloma III makes clear, liberals and leftists do not snicker when upstart foes begin to put a pebble or two into their scrips. Instead, they quake,

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they tremble, they gnash their teeth, and they whine "Unfair!" Indeed, there is something sublimely absurd about a book that can on one page admit the existence of "some 100 liberally oriented public-interest law firms" and on the facing page portray the recent emergence of "some dozen conservative regional public-interest law firms" as an ominous development. Given the author's admission that left-liberal causes have long enjoyed the support of "wealthy contributors, labor unions, liberal foundations, (and) some corporations" and of "the overwhelming majority of professionals in the communications media," his laments about the sinister rise of conservative think-tanks, media monitors, and political action groups are ridiculously disingenuous. Predictably, in the final chapter of this hastily written little volume, every pretense of logic and fairness disappears in a partisan appeal to "the center-left . . . to restore the balance."

Mr. Saloma, who died a year before his book was published, seems never to have thought about the possibility that the "balance" to which he refers was actually a highly undemocratic left-liberal hegemony that excluded conservative groups, who are now quite justified in challenging their exclusion. But then the very survival of overgrown left-liberalism requires, as did the survival of the giant from Gath, that certain things not enter the head. □

Editorial Comment

(continued from page 5)

"Comfort. Physical well-being. Money. Pleasure." are equally stupid. The answers obviously point to subjective and personal desires, goals, objectives. Values are objective notions, long-tested on mankind's scales and hierarchies of worth: integrity, compassion, tolerance, common sense. The nature and essence of values are spiritual, ethical, social. Freedom is a value, so is justice, reason, patriotism, the sense of tradition. The Democrats speak of valuables rather than values; they seem unaware that education in itself is not a value, but forming a functionally good, law-abiding, morally decent human being and citizen with the help of education is. Mr. Cuomo spoke about creating "the family of America" but his appeal to endless demands, entitlements, and selfishness of his various constituencies told us little about how to do such a thing. The family is a timeless attempt to structure authority on sacrifice, devotion, and love, and Mr. Cuomo says nothing about how he would persuade the union lobbyists, feminists, and environmentalists to accept such a social institution so threatening to their interests. The "Darwinian" Republicans, who themselves tend too often to drown in their syrupy family symbolizations, at least repeat: "Go out there, compete, build, struggle, create, work, honor law and order—and that's the best way to care about *your* family. Your enterprise, sweat, energy, playing by the rules and striving hard best protects *both* your family and a strong democratic society. You don't have to love the other guy to be fair to him and to construct a better world." The key word of this social philosophy is "opportunity," but the Democrats somehow ceased to be the party of opportunity and turned into a party of extortion on behalf of "the needy," "the forgotten," "the downtrodden." Both Mr. Cisneros and Mr. Cuomo intone hymns to the socioeconomic heroism of their forefathers who came here, worked hard and proudly climbed the social scale, loving America deliriously for giving them *the opportunity* for doing exactly what they were doing and being certain that their toil would have results. The luxury of buoyant personal hope was largely unknown in their countries of origin.

In Mr. Cuomo's oratory the Rooseveltian New Deal helped the generation of immigrants ". . . to reach heights that our own parents would not have dared dream of." Perhaps, but during the last 50 years, it was not the New Deal but the Yankee, Republican, and the despised country club which offered the last refuge to those who still believed in pursuit of individual happiness through laboriousness, "rat race," economic dynamism. The Republicans tried to preserve a social ethos; the Democrats chose social engineering. The former preached the American Dream as weaved out of relentless effort, faith in ruthless work, and unbound free enterprise—the texture of Cuomo's, Ferraro's, Cisneros's, and Dukakis's fathers' reveries, for all those family founders wanted in the New World was the freedom to benefit from their sacrificial industriousness. As of now, Republicans still want to extend and protect this privilege to anyone coming here. Democrats, ruled by the old immigrants' sons, wish now to offer the new immigrants a welfare state, a thoroughly regulated reality, where charity and compassion will be enforced by governmental edicts at the expense of the will to work, accumulate, create, enrich oneself, one's family, America. Small wonder that those Mayor Cisneros spoke about, those who just came, and those who still remember their Working Fathers—all those Cubans and Vietnamese, Ukrainians, and Lebanese, as well as old Poles and old Italians—started to massively vote Republican. Grim irony is vested in the circumstance that the Cuomos and the Cisneroses want now to deprive the "new arrivals" of what they came to these shores to find.

This election is going to be determined by the question each one of us asks himself: "What kind of life do we want?" The answer to this query is not economy alone. Do we want to defend ourselves and our way of life against communist encroachment—in whichever form it may invade our present reality? Are we ready to meet a historical challenge once again? Do we want to reach for the highest promise of the Judeo-Christian civilization —a community of humans that is free to pursue justice, order, and fairness?

We'd better ask ourselves these questions before we enter the polling place.

—Leopold Tyrmand

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Burn Out

***Streets of Fire;* Directed by Walter Hill; Written by Walter Hill and Larry Gross; Universal.**

by Stephen Macaulay

Streets of Fire has what is either a subtitle or a disclaimer: *A Rock & Roll Fable.* Moreover, as the movie opens, a title on the screen advises the viewer that he's viewing "Another Time, Another Place . . .," which, of course, provides the director, Walter Hill, with an out: he can claim that any and all rules of reason and good taste can be violated at will because the presentation is, after all, a complete fabrication. If that is the case, then it might be suggested that only imaginary viewers go see the film: mere mortal flesh is too weak to hold up under the audio-visual onslaught of banality and noise.

Streets of Fire aspires to be a "cult film," that is, one that ordinary people stay away from in droves but which others go see again and again and again, usually at midnight on a Friday or Saturday, by which time their senses are naturally or artificially numb. The term *cult film* doesn't provide an accurate sense of the makeup of the viewers; the term should be modified with descriptive terms that indicate that the attendees tend to be more than slightly masochistic. And one must be so to think anything nice about *Streets of Fire.* The dialogue makes Mickey Spillane seem like Proust; the acting makes cigar-store Indians seem to have the flexibility of a Garrick or Kean. The most disturbing part about *Streets of Fire* is not anything in the film itself, but something that it may portend: should more films like it be made, eventually society is going to sink to a level whereat *Streets of Fire* makes sense. □

Notables

Bathos

In a full-page ad in the *New York Times Book Review* for *Sex & Destiny: The Politics of Human Fertility* by Germaine Greer (Harper & Row; New York) a certain Fay Weldon's words from a piece in the London *Times* are quoted in type that's 1/2-inch high: "One of the most important books to be written this century." Now, what some people in London may know—something that fewer here in the colonies are aware of—is that Ms. Greer was once a comedian who worked with some of those men who are now best known under the encompassing sobriquet "Monty Python." Perhaps, unbeknownst to the readers of ads in the *NYTBR,* Fay Weldon's blurb is actually part of a comedy sketch. After all, the title of Ms. Greer's book does sound *rather* imposing, doesn't it? And its bulk—541 pages fat—is enough to make one imagine that this is a scholarly *tome,* enough to make one overlook the fact that the dust jacket photo shows the author not in professorial robes, but bib overalls. But when all of that is penetrated, when one gets to the heart of the matter, then one discovers that Ms. Greer's point is that many people in Western industrialized countries—especially those who die for their Sunday *Times*—subscribe to an attitude toward children noted by that great American philosopher W. C. Fields.

Firecracker

***Moscow on the Hudson;* Directed by Paul Mazursky; Written by Paul Mazursky and Leon Capetanos; Columbia Pictures.**

Is Bloomingdale's quintessentially American, the paradigm of this country in the late 20th century? Hollywood leads us to believe that it is so. First there was Madison (named after the avenue) the mermaid in *Splash* learning how to dress and even speak in Bloomies. Then in *Moscow on the Hudson* one Vladimir, a saxophonist in a Soviet circus band, decides to defect in the designer jeans department. Still, it's unlikely that the "big brown bag" (as the Bloomingdale's shopping bag is designated) will achieve eagle, baseball, Levi's, or Coca Cola status. Paul Mazursky does, however, put his finger on one thing in *Moscow on the Hudson* that is intrinsically American yet regularly ignored: the supermarket. In a too-brief segment of the film set in Moscow, Vladimir is shown waiting in endless lines for goods. Shoes that are several sizes too small are a real treasure; pickled mushrooms are Olympian ambrosia. Existential fulfillment is experienced when Vladimir comes to the cramped family (including Grandpa) living quarters bearing a half-dozen rolls of toilet paper—not Charmin, mind you, but something that a typical American would probably use in woodworking. Imagine the shock that overrides bliss that Vladimir experiences when, in a conventional U.S. grocery store, he is faced with an entire aisle of coffee—everything from Maxwell House to Sanka—that he is free to choose from. He hyperventilates and must be hospitalized.

It is difficult for Americans to understand freedom since it is somehow akin to air and water: things taken for granted but which must be preserved. Paul Mazursky should be commended for showing the citizens here how good they have it. You can be sure they won't see it in Moscow on the Moskva. □

Groveling to Glory

Roman Polanski: *Roman;* William Morrow; New York.

Roman Polanski on his favorite subject: "My friends and family . . . came to regard me as a buffoon. Ever eager to amuse and entertain, I assumed the role with good grace. I never minded."

Polanski could use the same words to describe his career as film director. Despite his obvious talents, Polanski has insisted on degrading himself for the amusement of the public. We can hardly blame him. His high-dive into the muck has earned him universal applause and an enviable bank balance. □

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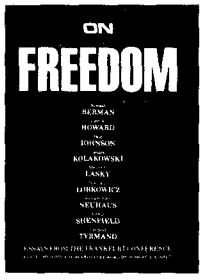

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A Nation's Art

Zoltán Kodály: *Psalmus Hungaricus; Hungarian Rondo; An Ode;* Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra and the Hungarian Radio Chorus; Conducted by Árpád Joó; Sefel; Park Ridge, NJ.

Zoltán Kodály: *Missa Brevis; Te Deum;* Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra and Hungarian Radio Chorus; Conducted by Árpád Joó; Sefel; Park Ridge, NJ.

Zoltán Kodály: *Peacock Variations; Symphony;* Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra and Hungarian State Concert Orchestra; Conducted by Árpád Joó; Sefel; Park Ridge, NJ.

Zoltán Kodály: *Galánta Dances; Concerto for Orchestra; Minuetto Serio;* Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra and Hungarian State Concert Orchestra; Conducted by Árpád Joó; Sefel; Park Ridge, NJ.

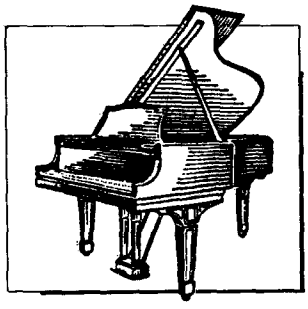
Zoltán Kodály: *Marosszék Dances, Folk Dances of Kálló; Summer Evening;* Hungarian Radio Chorus and Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra; Conducted by Árpád Joó; Sefel; Park Ridge, NJ.

Zoltán Kodály: *Háry János Suite; Theatre Overture; Ballet Music;* Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra; Conducted by Árpád Joó; Sefel; Park Ridge, NJ.

by Daniel Dickinson

Until the 19th century, most art, whether great or transitory, was the fruit of the unconscious. Written to order for patrons or for the Church, it tried to be that which was required. Masses strove to provoke religious sentiment, concertos dazzled with their brilliance, operas hoped to stir the emotions of the upper classes with elaborate constructs drawn from classical literature, such as Monteverdi's *The Coronation of Pompei,* or saucy satires on contemporary manners, like Mozart's *Cosi Fan Tutti.* Though the patron system has suffered nearly a century of abuse and derogation, it produced the music of Mozart, Bach, and Haydn, the art of da Vinci and Michelangelo, and the architecture of Bernini and Wren.

With Beethoven, everything changed. By asserting his moral and intellectual superiority over the society around him, he helped to create the cult of the artist. No longer was the composer/sculptor/writer the technician of a cultural and social elite. Now the artist was an end unto himself—he did not reflect the world, he shaped it. Increasingly, audiences failed to follow. After a Wagner



opera, Gioacchino Rossini said, "One can't judge *Lohengrin* by a first hearing, and I certainly don't intend to hear it a second time." Epitomizing the confusion of many, Mark Twain avowed that "Wagner's music is better than it sounds." With the advent of the 20th century, the creating elite saw their role not so much as leading the ignorant masses, as Wagner had, but as embodying the living expression of dissent against the times. "Art," declared Paul Gauguin, "is either a revolutionist or a plagiarist." All too often, the artistic merits of works were gauged by the disgust they created in the minds of the hearers and viewers. Near riots at the introduction of *The Rite of Spring* served to launch the career of Igor Stravinsky. Opposition by audiences and bureaucrats aided the recognition of Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Bartók, Mahler, Alban Berg, and John Cage. Composers who refused to conform to the dictates of cultural trends were labeled "bourgeois." Increasingly, classical music, once the shared avocation of educated people around the globe, became the captive of a cultural cognoscenti.

Yet not all contemporary composers have marched in lockstep with the tempo of the times. Just as the early 20th century promoted revolutionary and millenarian causes designed to shape the "new man," it also spawned nationalistic movements, which sought to explore the roots of traditional culture. Through this process of discovery, new sorts of music emerged.

In England, Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) and Gustav Holst (1874-1934) spent years tramping the British countryside, collecting folk songs. They fashioned, from the themes of these, compositions too little heard in the concert halls. In Finland, Jean Sibelius created a wholly new music based on legends in the Finnish epic the *Kalevala,* while in the U.S., George Gershwin fused European classical traditions together with the essence of American jazz to create works whose very popularity has retarded their full acceptance by the cultural commissars. In Hungary, just prior to World War I, Zoltán Kodály and Béla Bartók began to fashion a music based on that nation's rich folk heritage.

Bartók, of course, is the better known of the two. A true swimmer in the intellectual currents of the time, his compositions, with their dissonances and stridency, command attention throughout the world. Probably more

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popular in his native land is Kodály, whose music, like that of Vaughan Williams and Gershwin, is distinctly national. Like both composers, Kodály was influenced in his youth by the Impressionists. The earliest of his compositions, represented in *Summer Evening,* is imitation Debussy. But what an evocative substitute! The work, though hardly known, would receive a warm welcome on any concert program.

Caught up in the currents of World War I, which produced an independent Hungary for the first time in centuries, Kodály's music took a decidedly nationalistic turn. Pieces such as the *Marosszék* and *Galánta Dances,* the *Peacock Variations,* and the *Folk Dances of Kálló* celebrated the new nation's ancient folk traditions, while the opera *Háry János,* the music of which Kodály fashioned into a popular suite, poked gentle fun at the same.

It was through the vocal arts that Kodály made his most lasting contributions to both composing and his country. Written in 1923 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the unification of Buda and Pest, the *Psalmus Hungaricus* is, in fact, an impassioned musical protest against the dismemberment of Hungary in the chaos following the end of the Great War. It's Kodály's greatest work. Nearly its equal is the *Missa Brevis,* drafted in 1944 during the siege of Budapest by the Red Army, a Soviet victory which led to the extinction of Hungary's brief spark of liberty. Through the extremes of its vocal articulations, you sense Kodály's forebodings of the times to come.

"Art," wrote England's Vaughan Williams, "like charity, must begin at home. If it is to be of any value it must grow out of the very life of the composer, the community in which he lives, the nation to which he belongs." By daring to be particular, Kodály's music touches us all. □

THE AMERICAN PROSCENIUM

Peace Mongers

We received a piece of direct mail sent to us from an outfit in San Francisco entitled U.S. Out of Central America. There we could read:

> We are not from the left or the right, we are not from the same political organization, and we probably have different opinions on many things.

As the very name of the organization and its promotional text indicate, its founders and sponsors are firmly against "rampant, uncontrollable U.S. militarism" in Central America. This is clear; other parts of their statements, however, are unclear or downright false, or products of paltry political mendacity. The authors are simply lying when they write about representing Americans "from the left or the right." Beginning with the leaflet's signers (Berrigan, Chomsky, Falk, Mitford, Spock, Wald) and going through the listing of supporters, they are all *adherents* to the far left of the American political spectrum. Their "different opinions," as measured against what we know about them from their public activities, are a myth: they have mysteriously failed to resist all Moscow's global policies, especially in the so-called Third World, and have shown a uniform fondness for Marxist-Leninist prescriptions in dealing with contemporary issues. We doubt that any of them would ever dare to challenge the Soviet state's morality and imperial design in any matter, with the possible exception of Sakharov's murder. The underwriters of the leaflet state:

> The CIA mining of Nicaragua's harbors has made it clearer than ever that millions of Americans must join in taking a strong stand against U.S. intervention.

They cannot count on our pennies to back their efforts. To any unprejudiced mind, the U.S. should do practically everything possible to bring down the Sandinista totalitarian oppression in Nicaragua. Every Hungarian, Pole, or Czech, who lived

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through the 1945-1951 period in his country, immediately recognizes that Nicaragua under the Sandinistas' yoke is a precise replica of the Eastern European model of the so-called "people's democracy," where ruthless atrocities are committed to install the iron-clad communist social infrastructure of power, which would make any political opposition and protest impossible. In Eastern Europe, under the avuncular protection of the Red Army, the process could be as brutal, underhanded, and invisible, as the West could never imagine. In the neighborhood of the American howitzers across the Honduran border, the merry bustling of Russian, Cuban, and native experts on human enslavement have to do some window dressing. Organizations like U.S. Out of Central America, with their loads of Berrigans, Catholic "nuns," Ramsey Clarks, Pete Seegers and all assortments of fellow travelers, will help. Ships of useful fools with Nobel Prize distinctions will bring supplies and encouragement.

In 1945, in Nuremberg, we defined the meaning of war crimes and war criminals. Sooner or later, mankind will have to understand and define the significance of peace criminals. There are plenty of them among us. □

Non-Sentimental Education

The magnitude of mental confusion in which this society exists—actually, considered normal and permanent by historians endowed with a sense of humor—overwhelms us on occasion. In August, three months before the election, a Gallup poll found that Walter Mondale and his ultra-liberal Democratic Party are believed by the majority of Americans to be better suited "to improve the quality of public education" than President Reagan and his conservative Republicans. Nothing short of despair will invade the mind of an American who can remember the rapid downfall and disintegration of the American public education that began in the mid-60's with the wild experimentation by liberal doctrinaires and psychological charlatans who took over the NEA—their storm troopers' organization. It was then when education had abandoned its goal of forming character through knowledge and became the distributor of ideological clichés about the transformation of society and the destruction of antiquated pride in what America was, is, and should be. A narrow-minded, if not nasty, vision of an unmoored value-free individualism had been declared the civic ideal. Twenty years later, the big city schools all over the country have been transformed into enclaves of random but lethal crime, where bathrooms became places of sex and mugging. Playgrounds turned into stock exchanges for drugs. It was all the vision and the creation of liberal Democrats theoretically fortified by the liberal intellectual establishment, fiercely protected by the liberal Supreme Court, and by the liberal bureaucracy in D.C. entrenched there by Kennedy, Johnson, and Carter. And now, in 1984, the American public still thinks that those who have smashed to pieces the old, precious timepiece should be more trusted with fixing it than those who have discovered the damage and the loss. □

JOURNALISM

Highbrow Prattle

Let us praise famous men for their unique ability to talk foolishness and be admired for what they say. Here is Prof. Arthur Schlesinger, *lui même,* in the *Wall Street Journal:*

> Where Washington seems to regard the East European satellites as faithful creatures of the Kremlin, West Europeans see them as restless, discontented and, from the Soviet viewpoint, quite unreliable. Where the West Europeans favor the use of trade and cultural exchange to promote the independence of the satellites, the Reagan policy, they fear, is driving the satellites into greater dependence on the Soviet Union.

Anyone with a more discriminate sense of the factual, and a better recall of contemporary history than the famed historian would remember, with a sigh, that since at least 1956 we have done nothing but promote trade and cultural exchange with the captive nations the professor calls "satellites." Under Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon we exchanged with Poland, for one, so much culturally that we provided all Gomulka's and then Gierek's thugs with the fattest and juiciest grants the State Department had to offer. Today, Poles are being trampled on by Jaruzelski's henchmen, still sporting those Brooks Bros. suits and ties they purchased at the time of those delightful exchanges to which we gave our best hopes and which they immediately and cynically converted into petty material advantages through immaterial promises. Prof. Schlesinger may teach his students many things, but he himself will never learn that "independence" or "greater dependence" of the subjugated Eastern Europe is exclusively regulated by a couple of offices in the Kremlin, and by nobody else. Or by uprisings. □

Minds Warped or Twisted?

The *New York Times Sunday Magazine* has produced in print a sentence that unmistakably attests to one of two possibilities: either its editors do not know the meaning of conjunctions, a serious grammatical disability, or

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their liberalism automatically turns their minds into Tibetan prayer wheels. Here is the sample from a piece on General Vessey, our current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

> Although the general is 11 years younger than the President, he shares Mr. Reagan's belief in old-fashioned virtues.

The amazingly utilized "although" made us sentimental. We are roughly 2400 years younger than Socrates and we share his notion of old-fashioned virtues. □

Neo-Chastity & Neo-Intelligence

In a curiously schizophrenic article in *Ms.* entitled "The Uses of Chastity and Other Paths to Sexual Pleasures," Germaine Greer, longtime radical feminist, agonized over how young women are "jeopardizing their health and fertility with potent medications and mischievous gadgetry" in the sterile sexual frenzy she helped initiate a decade ago. Unable to admit that she might have been wrong about the Western mores she helped dismantle, Ms. Greer continues her attack against every Western norm that denies "the right to sexual activity," while she simultaneously lauds Third World forms of chastity as wonderful and worth preserving for "young people born into" such cultures. For those reborn into the anticultural "permissive lifestyle" still advocated for *Ms.* readers, Ms. Greer suggests only curtailing *vaginal* sex. Other types of sex are positively encouraged, with the "strategies" employed by homosexuals held up for particular emulation. As a justification for experimenting with what has traditionally been called perversion, Ms. Greer offers this rationale:

> Sex is no more unintelligent or unsophisticated a pastime than conversation, or at least it shouldn't be.

Does this mean professional hookers should be compelled to read Voltaire, Shakespeare, and Montaigne? Or would Harold Robbins and Danielle Steele do?

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LIBERAL CULTURE

Blah, Blah, Blah . . . .

In an era when frozen embryos, conceived on processed sperm, are considered legal inheritors to financial assets, and former convicted felons seek redemption by supervising police in Chicago Mayor Washington's administration, nothing is particularly surprising anymore. In the *Chicago Tribune,* someone identified as cochairman of the Illinois Gay and Lesbian Task Force bitterly complains that homosexual high school students are forced to exist in a social and cultural environment in which:

> There are no guidelines for normal growth. There are no positive role models.

No one, neither the reporter, nor the *Trib* editors, seems to bother any longer with the fundamental rules of reality and sense. The simple truth that something that is *abnormal* by nature and definition cannot manifest itself as *normal* growth becomes the casualty of the merciless liberal din.

The *New York Times Magazine,* one of the best camouflaged incubators of obscurantism, promotes the opinions of Barbara Ehrenreich, a feminist-socialist (a combination of demonic force) whose intelligence, concern, and responsibility for her propounded views are breathtaking:

> After all, the traditional female contributions to marriage have been menial, like housework, or intangible, like emotional support.

Menial? Is providing man, nation, humankind, and the world with continuation of life a "menial contribution"? Is "emotional support" an "intangible" element of marriage? And what about love? Does the *New York Times* inform us (which amounts to a verdict, of course) that love is out as a permissible female contribution to marriage? Even a misconceived, or a short-lasting love? Ah, the feminist jabberwocky—as Sir John Gielgud would say in his Paul Masson commercials.

Finally, *Time,* not to be outdone by anybody, praises a new book (are they really new, all those books?) by a female "Manhattan Psychiatrist." Here is her complaint:

> The conditioning that helps to produce [masochism] is almost in the air we breathe: first, most parents want boys rather than girls, and second, our culture places emphasis on a woman's beauty rather than her achievement.

Did the "Manhattan Psychiatrist" ever give a thought to what would happen to *our* culture, indeed to *any* culture, if woman's beauty had not become the arch-catalyst of philosophy, aesthetics, poetry, art, etc. Ah, the feminist reduction of values, the militant dwarfism of human desires, the quest after androgyny that, sooner or later, will suffocate the smell of roses under the pretext of eradicating sexism. □

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